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The Shop—A Center of Mass Activity

THE material in this issue of the *Party Organizer* contains some of the best experiences related and discussed at the recent regional shop conferences. The exchange of these experiences should help in the further development and improvement of our shop work.

But in order to realize this, it is necessary to study and digest these experiences. One of the reasons why our work in the shops lacks political clarity and perseverance, why mistakes are repeated, is because some of the experiences become frozen—remain the property of a few individuals who are immediately and directly involved in the work.

The collective exchange of these experiences, the examination of these experiences will deepen and enrich our shop work. It is one of the guarantees in applying *concretely* the line of the Party in shop work and in the collective political check up.

If the experiences related at the shop conferences would have been told to the Party at an earlier date it would have aided greatly in our work. The *Daily Worker*, in reprinting some of the speeches made at the shop conferences asked time and again for articles discussing and commenting on these experiences, for articles relating to new experiences. *Not one single article came in.*

Who is responsible for this? We must say the responsibility lies mainly with us, with the district organizations. It is necessary to organize, encourage, guide and develop the initiative of the comrades participating in shop work in writing articles containing important experiences.

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The pre-convention discussion must serve to develop the mass work of the Party. The main phase in the pre-convention discussion in the units should be the development of shop work. The discussion in the units should be based on the line of the Fourteenth Plenum of our C. C. that "the main basis of the work and development of the lower Party organization is the work in the factory." This issue of the *Party Organizer* should be used as a guide containing concrete material for shop work in our pre-convention discussion.

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What is the chief task of our Party at the present moment? The Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I. gives us a clear guide. It says: "*The greatest possible development and strengthening*

of the struggle of the proletariat against wage cuts and worsening of the conditions of labor, the exertion of all the efforts of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations to insure the independent leadership of strike struggles and the unemployed movement, the raising of the fighting capacity of the masses, leading them on the basis of their own experiences from the struggle for every day partial demands to the struggle for the general class tasks of the proletariat represent the *chief tasks* for all sections of the Communist International under the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilization."

What is the main base for the development of the struggle against the capitalist offensive at the present moment? It is the shop, the center of the attack of the capitalist class. Isn't it a fact that our Party is still isolated from the main sections of the American working class precisely because we lack solid contacts with the workers in the shops, particularly in the basic industries? The steel workers, the automobile workers, the railroad workers, have received numerous wage cuts. Certainly these workers are dissatisfied and are ready to struggle. The steel magnates have announced new wage cuts. The workers in each industry are facing new wage cuts and most vicious working conditions. We must say that the absence of large scale struggles in these industries is primarily due to our isolation from these workers, and lack of contacts and organization in the shops.

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The discussions at these two conferences have shown that the Resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum of our C. C. and the struggle for the carrying out of the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution is beginning to take root amongst large sections of the Party membership. At the same time it also showed that the Section, District and Central Committee functionaries have not sufficiently participated in the attempts of the lower organizations and our comrades in the shops in developing shop work and shop struggles. This only once more emphasizes the need of struggle against our bureaucratic methods of work and leadership. Indeed one of the main complaints of the comrades active in shop work was the fact that they do not receive immediate, intimate guidance from the higher bodies.

Both conferences have disclosed that our greatest weakness in the development of shop work is the inability of raising partial demands. And even still more, our inability to apply the policy of the united front in setting in motion the most backward sections of the workers in the shop for struggles against immediate grievances. At the same time comrades active in the shop have brought forward excellent examples how a Communist, by correctly raising partial demands and applying the policy of the united front, gains the confidence of the workers in the shop and develops shop struggles.

The discussion also emphasized the fact that our weaknesses in developing a correct policy of the united front was due to an underestimation and inability of fighting social fascism. It must be remembered that the shop is the very basis of building the revolutionary trade unions and opposition groups within the reformist unions. *The struggle for the shop is the key point in the development of a correct revolutionary strike strategy.*

The positive lessons brought forward at the Conferences are of great value and immediate use to the entire Party in the development of shop work. But this progress was mainly confined to the lighter industries. The Regional Conference for the concentration districts has brought forward the difficulties and main problems of shop work in the basic industries. We must remember that our policy of concentrating in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago is based on the struggle of our Party to "firmly root itself in the decisive industries . . . and overcome the isolation of the Party from the decisive masses of the American proletariat." And this is the key problem that still confronts our Party.

The present strike struggles in Detroit in the auto shops are of special significance to every district. These strikes are to a large extent the result of the improved methods of work, the guidance and participation of the district leadership in the work. The experiences in Detroit reprinted here which give some of the methods used previous to the strike should be studied carefully by all the districts.

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The need of winning the native born workers was stressed at the shop conferences. At the same time the comrades refuted the ideas that foreign born workers cannot organize the native born workers in the shops. A living illustration of the important role which foreign born workers can play in organizing the native born workers was given by a comrade from a Patterson shop.

At the shop conferences all of the important practical political problems of shop work—the question of the unemployed in shop work, the question of the shop agitation, the question of the Party and union work in the shop—all of these problems were raised and discussed by the comrades active in shop work. The successful development of our shop work depends on the solution of all these problems. The exchange of experiences at the shop conferences and the further discussion in the entire Party will help in the solution of these problems.

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An outstanding weakness of both shop conferences was the very small number of Negro comrades present. Even in the discussion when the comrades were describing the composition

of shops in basic industries they merely mentioned Negro workers. But this was only done statistically. No reports whatsoever were made with regard to our special methods of work and activities in winning the Negro workers in the industries. The Fourteenth Plenum Resolution already spoke of the need of "making the red unions the real channels of Negro work." The entire Party must immediately realize this great weakness and take energetic steps in winning the Negro workers in the shops for struggle.

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At the Eastern Conference we had some women comrades from the lighter industries, but this number was very limited. Shop work is unthinkable without the winning of the women workers in the industries.

At the Eastern regional conference a most instructive report was given by the Y. C. L. comrade on the leadership in the Trenton doll strike. This strike has resulted in material gains for the young workers. The experiences in Trenton emphasized both the importance of the youth in shop and strike struggles and the possibility of winning strikes when a correct strike strategy is applied.

A necessary condition for the development of struggles in the shop is to fight against opportunism. At both conferences right and left opportunism manifested itself. Opinions that the social fascists can better formulate immediate demands than we, that the appearance of the Party in the shop is a hindrance in developing shop organization emphasize once more that we must carry on a decisive struggle against the right danger as the chief danger and against the "left" deviation.

The best indication of the earnestness with which the Party is beginning to take up shop work is the spirit of real self-criticism which prevailed at these conferences—self criticism not based merely on confessing sins, and pledges to be good, but based on actual contact with the workers and experiences of struggles in the shops. Only a self-criticism which leads to self-correction is Bolshevik self-criticism.

The tempo in our shop work is improving, the general life of the Party is beginning to improve, the valuable guide of the C. I. in aiding our Party in the struggle against sectarianism is beginning to bear fruit. The beginning of contacts and organization in the shops have helped to create a healthy and refreshing atmosphere at the shop conferences. This spirit must permeate the entire Party from top to bottom.

Let us increase the tempo of our shop work. Deeper into the ranks of the Party! More intimate and permanent contacts with the large masses of workers!

Concentration—A Means of Winning the Workers in the Key Industries

THE Communist International in Jan. 1931 raised for our Party the need of concentrating on the most decisive industries (mine, steel, textile, auto, marine) in the five largest districts (2, 5, 6, 7, 8). Since then the word "concentrate" has become one of the many terms of the Party. We "concentrate" feverishly. Party units were assigned to concentration points. Full-time organizers were appointed to certain factories. Special comrades were elected by the District Buros to supervise the concentration work of the Party. The comrades involved in this work tried their utmost to carry out the many instructions of the higher committees. But despite all the energy expended, the very formal and sectarian approach to this vital problem served as an obstacle to penetrating the concentration factories. The Fourteenth Plenum had to again emphasize that we "*must take steps to carry thru the directives of January, 1931, on concentration.*"

Only after the Fourteenth Plenum did the necessity of concentration begin to permeate the Party. At the conferences on shop work held in New York and Chicago, the comrades in relating their experiences showed that while our work in the shops in still of an elementary character, there is a beginning to understand how to work in the factories. As a result of a better approach to the problems in the factories and improved methods of work, some noticeable results have been attained. At the same time, however, there is still confusion on many important questions in connection with our concentration work.

Our Past Methods of Concentration

What were our past methods of concentration? The concrete experiences brought out by the comrades at the shop conferences showed in general the following weakness in our concentration work:

1) Hunting contacts; 2) hunting grievances; 3) stereotyped shop papers, leaflets, issued primarily before the major campaigns of the Party; 4) parasitic form of concentration; 5) lack of leadership from the higher committees; 6) lack of understanding of the role and work of the shop nuclei; 7) insufficient understanding of how to safeguard the Party and organizations inside the factories; 8) neglect in developing struggles against espionage in the factories.

We cannot deal in detail with every point enumerated above. The basic weakness was the formal mechanical approach to the work. We were satisfied if we could show that we secured a number of contacts. *We did not really study and know the conditions inside the factories, raising the most burning problems facing the workers and developing struggles around these*

issues. As a result all these contacts remained on paper without any organizational advancement.

We did not consult the workers with whom we had contact, discussing with them the grievances in the shop, formulating together with them concrete demands on the basis of these grievances, and activating them in developing the work in the shop. We were merely satisfied with issuing a shop paper or a leaflet on the grievances which were dug up from the outside.

We had a conception in the past that by assigning a full time comrade to take care of the concentration on the selected factory, we solved the problem. The result was that this comrade tried to do everything alone—edited the shop paper, mimeographed and distributed it, ran after contacts, and if he succeeded in finding out certain grievances in the factory from one of the contacts, without consulting anybody, proposed an action against this grievance in the shop paper or shop leaflet issued by himself. With this method of work we could not get any results.

In most of the concentration points the street nucleus or the individual comrades assigned to the work were left entirely alone. The higher committees, section and district, very seldom took the trouble to sit with them and discuss the problems which they face in their work. The higher committees assumed that the circular instructions sent to these concentration points were sufficient to develop the work. We have instances where the shop nucleus was entirely wiped out because of our lack of understanding of how to develop and lead the struggle inside the factory. In other cases, the shop nucleus did not do anything inside the factory for years because of the lack of leadership from the higher committees. In some of the concentration districts, the district committees solved this problem by assigning one member of the District Committee to take care of the shop work. He was made responsible for this work. He faced exactly the same situation as the comrades assigned to the selected factory. He did not get any help from the district committee and settled the problem singlehanded.

We have cases where members of shop units were used for general street agitation among the unemployed, with the result that the members of the shop nucleus were soon exposed and fired. In one city we "safeguarded" the members of the shop unit by having them meet in the headquarters of the unemployed council just opposite the factory in which the members were working. Most of the members of the shop nucleus were naturally fired from the plant.

For years we have been speaking about fighting the espionage system, yet we have a case where a whole shop nucleus was wiped out because we had a spy in the shop nucleus. The spy was not fired from the factory. That happened 8 months ago. But the spy is still in the Party and has been allowed to be active

in the union. The excuse of the district leadership for not exposing this spy, is that there is insufficient evidence against him.

Wrong Conceptions of Concentration

In our concentration work in the past we faced a number of wrong conceptions and tendencies. Some comrades developed the theory that in order to make inroads into the big factories we have to first penetrate the small factories. The conception expressed was that since it is easier to build up organizations in the small factories, these organizations will supply the necessary forces and money for penetrating the big factories. While it is true that sometimes in one industry or town an effective strike struggle will have repercussions in the larger plants (Detroit), generally such a theory is justification for following the path of least resistance.

This conception of concentration negates the Leninist understanding of developing organization and mass struggles in the key factories of the decisive industry which will influence not only the workers in the small factories of the same industry, but all the workers in the city and often influence the development of struggles in other parts of the country.

The Warren strike influenced favorably the development of struggles in many other steel plants. In the factories where we succeeded to popularize the struggle of the Warren steel workers, we succeeded in creating enthusiasm among the workers and in some places gained organizational results.

We had a theory developed in one place (Binghamton) that concentration does not mean to select one factory and develop struggle and organize inside of it, but to carry on general agitation in all the factories in the same industry in the town, and wherever a struggle develops as a result of our general agitation—that factory will be our concentration point for future work.

There is a further wrong conception that has manifested itself in some of the districts that shop papers cannot be issued in factories where we have only one or two party members, or a few reliable non-Party contacts, because the information that these comrades will give us for the shop paper can't be properly checked up. This was theorized in order to delay the issuance of papers in the shop until a strong group was established. This had more basic causes—the fear to conduct agitation which would “interfere” with the narrow organizational routine work.

All these weaknesses and bad tendencies enumerated above were sharply exposed and fought at the two shop conferences. The conferences showed that we were making the first beginnings in our work in the shops.

Beginnings in Improving Our Work

What is of special importance is the fact that our comrades are learning the need of exposing even the most elementary grievances in the shop and developing partial struggles around these demands.

Existing groups and even individual members were able thru proper methods of work in the shop to set in motion the whole department around a certain grievance. The action of the Stick-Together-Club in winning the 15-minute rest period; the movements in the steel plants against the welfare schemes; the defeating of wage cuts in a given department or section of workers (steel, miners), the gaining of certain demands as free shoes, sanitary conditions, etc; are all evidence of the fact that the comrades understand more clearly the necessity of rallying the workers around their immediate issues. These small actions in most instances resulted in organizational gains. *However, these struggles are still isolated to small groups of workers and were not utilized to broaden the struggle and develop it to a struggle directed against the state apparatus, etc.*

In many places we developed a system of getting and organizing contacts, using all possible forms of approaching the workers in the factory. In one place we succeeded to get splendid connections in a big factory thru a checker club. Another place we organized our forces in the factory for struggle through a sport club. And at a third place a small house party helped us to build up a fighting group inside of the factory.

The comrades are beginning to understand that personal friendship with the workers inside the factory is an important factor in building up organizations; that these organizations will disappear if we do not develop struggles even on the smallest grievances.

We have some experiences where the district leadership as a whole was drawn into the work, meeting with 3 or 4 workers of the factory, discussing with them their problems, and how to organize the workers inside of the factory (Detroit). This proper method of leadership resulted in a rapid development of the movement inside of the factories. At the same time the leadership became acquainted with the detailed problems of the workers and were able to lead them (the resulting strikes in Detroit).

We saw from our experiences that the foreign born comrades could become the leaders and organizers of the native born workers (Paterson, Warren, Detroit, Gary, etc.)

In certain places we did not only talk abstractly about the problem of connecting up the struggle of the unemployed with the employed in the factories, but actually developed such struggles and used in many cases the unemployed struggles to gain organizational results and develop struggles inside of the factories (in many steel factories).

The experiences proved that a mere issuing of a shop paper or a leaflet even without any organization inside of the factory could develop struggles and win demands and as a result of this create organizations inside of the factory.

Thus we began to understand that "the first essential condition for successful work in the factories is daily contact with the masses of workers in it and a thorough knowledge of the position of the workers in the factory and of the concrete conditions for struggle" (Fourteenth Plenum Resolution)

Concentration a Political Responsibility

The small successes cannot satisfy us in our work. The fact remains that the number of shop nuclei did not increase in the basic industries, that the membership of the existing shop nuclei is growing very slowly. In the November-December issue of the *Party Organizer* we wrote about our factory work, especially about systematic attention of the leadership to factory work and how to adopt conspiratorial methods in this work.

It is necessary to emphasize a few more points:

That District and Section Committees must consider their first political responsibility to those units which are concentrating on the important plants. This means that all the problems, in the concentration work, must be thoroughly taken up in the respective committee, a clear line of policy developed. There must also be the strictest check-up on the decisions made and on the forces assigned to carry through the work. While comrades should be assigned to help the units to carry on the work, the main problem is to develop the initiative of the units and to train the members in the concentration points.

Concentration means to utilize all available forces and organizations to penetrate the selected factory. The I. L. D., W. I. R., F. S. U., Labor Sports Union, should very consciously be drawn into the concentration work. The Unemployed Councils, trade unions, Y. C. L., must coordinate their plans with the Party organizations. The fractions in the various mass organizations led by reactionary and social-fascists should be made conscious of the concentration plan of the Party.

The language papers should be used more extensively in our concentration work. There was a very good suggestion in the Chicago shop conference which should be considered very seriously, i.e., that all the shop papers and even shop leaflets should be sent to the language papers which have influence among the foreign born workers in the given factory.

The leading committees should investigate very carefully the causes of the many failures in their efforts to penetrate the factory and to continue the work with renewed energy on the

basis of carefully considered measures to overcome the previous shortcomings.

We have to put an end to the deadly organizational daily routine in our factory work. We must develop the struggle against the capitalist offensive and against the policy of the reformists.

"Precisely because little time remains before the revolutionary crisis matures is it necessary without losing a moment to intensify and accelerate our Bolshevik mass work to win over the majority of the working class, to increase the revolutionary activity of the working class . . . The main link which the Communist Parties must seize upon in solving this problem is the struggle for the everyday economic and political interests of the broad masses against the increasing poverty, against oppression, violence and terror." (Thesis of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.)

—J. P.

The reports from the various plants on our experiences in shop work are reprinted here without any mention of factory, city or name of comrade. This is done with the view of protecting our work and connections.—Editorial Committee.

Steel and Metal

How to Develop Permanent and Intimate Contacts

THE decision of the Party to make this steel plant a point of concentration is absolutely correct. We have seen in the last two or three months activity to make it ready for immediate transformation to war production. Already barbed wire is made inside the mill for Japan. We have not yet the full details on this. What is particularly significant is that while all the 15 open hearth furnaces are not running full capacity, they have built up three more open hearths—and this together with other activities in the plant shows that with the cooperation of the War Department the plant is being transformed for war production in preparation for war. Normally 14,000 workers are employed here. In the event of war at least 20,000 will be employed, since they will manufacture very important war material.

Within the last two years the wages of the workers have been

cut by 50 per cent. There have been three regular general cuts in February, October and January of last year. They affected all departments. But the wages are forced down even beyond this, because most of the workers are employed part time.

No one has been developed sufficiently to take over the editing of the paper. It has been the product of Comrade X. If comrade X, went to jail the paper went also to jail, and did not appear. However, as far as furnishing the contents for the paper some articles were furnished by members, but in the main most of the contents were written by Comrade X. We never had an editorial committee or discussion of articles that were placed in the paper. *However the paper itself had won the admiration of the steel workers in the plant, even though it has many faults. It has been able to gain several demands for the workers—such as water fountains that never existed, such as safety devices and many others. Workers whom we didn't even know went into action and developed a little struggle of their own without our leadership, only through the guidance of the paper. These struggles came to our attention only later.*

However, the lack of personal contact inside the mill, the inability of our comrades to weld contact with other workers, made the shop paper something that was just gotten out, the grievances raised in the bulletin were not developed, no action could be developed since our comrades did not form an integral part inside the mill to take up these grievances.

We must have a different approach to concentration. Unless the Party leading committees and functionaries give more constant and serious attention to shop work, unless there is organized a most intensive study of our experiences in shop work, we will not be able to take the proper steps. If there is going to be concentration, let there be concentration and not just talk about concentration.

System in Making Individual Contacts

How are we beginning to move out of this rut? Our system down there now in the mills is the old reliable grape vine system—that is like they have in jails—contact with one man, seeking out the trusted or best man as a means of propaganda and developing organizational contact all along the line. We have some real good examples in this connection.

We are establishing a rigid check-up on the work inside the mill. At every unit meeting and union meeting, comrades get up and report on their week's activities, report on their assignments, that they have done during the week, whom they have handled, what contacts they have secured, etc. Already, although this has taken place now within the last month and a half, we are beginning to see tremendous results and possibilities that will come out of this method of check-up.

Some of Our Experiences in Establishing Contacts

Take, for instance, Comrade H., who has four friends. He is a Negro worker who came to our dance and was quite impressed in seeing so many Negro and white workers together. It was an I.L.D. dance. Our section organizer set the example to the unit and went over and started talking to different workers who were in the hall and he picked out this Comrade H., who proved to be very interested. He stated that he worked in the mill and the section organizer went to his house and talked with him and made friends with his wife and children. Then Comrade H. took the section organizer to four other workers. From 8 o'clock to 12 o'clock they went to visit these workers. In this way, a group is being formed around Comrade H. This is just what we want.

Take, for instance, Comrade B., who came in through a Russian organization. We have been checking up on this comrade constantly. For weeks he failed to make any report. Finally, by putting pressure on Comrade B., we got him to make an appointment with three American workers whom he knows. I went with Comrade B. up to these three American workers' homes. There we began to talk about farming, etc., and pretty soon it developed in a roundabout way into a discussion on organization.

It happens that Comrade B. knows that one of these American workers likes playing checkers. Now, comrades, do you know what happened? Probably this does not apply to every situation. But it did work here. Comrade B. knew a comrade in Baltimore who was a champion checker player. He said, I am going to bring this comrade here. This interested many workers. Eight of them came down. In other words, eleven contacts were realized as a result of this.

We have a comrade here, sitting right in this room, who has an "unusual" way of making contacts. He makes friends with the workers on the job. You know the lunch buckets are not so full now. He manages to carry a few extra apples in his lunch basket. He passes the apples to some of the workers and develops a friendship with them and so he was able to bring several workers into the union. He is an Italian worker, and yet he was able to bring some American workers in. Now we have this American worker, the same one this Italian worker drew into the union, and he is very interested. He wants to know why we can't get American workers into the union. I explained the resolutions of the plenums to him in a very elementary language. I told him some of the mistakes that we make, what our troubles were. And he said: "You know down there in—— there are many fellows who may not be interested in the union, but they are interested in learning about radios, and he also knew a fellow who can give instructions, and they are going to start a radio club."

Unity of Employed and Unemployed

Unemployed work is very important, particularly here. Formerly all of our plans were on paper. But now we are actually putting them into effect. A thorough discussion was held in the nucleus, especially on the question of the Hunger March. As a result of this it was proposed immediately that the Unemployed Council should be formed, that is the organizational committee, and the development of committees in the steel workers' section.

Many comrades felt that the workers in this section were not ready to fight. Of course, it was known that there was misery to a certain degree, but how much we did not know, because we did not get among the workers in the neighborhoods. And there we found that within a radius of six blocks, with the exception of two families, everybody was in immediate need of food, coal or clothing. As a result of this canvassing, three committees doing this work, two on each committee going around from one family to another, talking to them, asking them about their conditions, talking to them about the necessity of getting together, we found a splendid response. After the two day's investigation we were able to form an unemployed committee on the following day, getting the house of a worker right in that block, and in this way we formed two block committees in two important steel workers' streets. Following that we developed action and were able to win relief for unemployed steel workers. This is just a beginning. Our perspective is for developing block committees on a wide area throughout the steel workers' neighborhoods and a march on the plant, possibly in six or seven weeks, according to how well we are able to mobilize and organize.

Unemployed work is extremely important. On this question our ability to organize the unemployed steel workers will make it just that much easier for us to organize steel workers who still have a job.

On the question of developing issues. Only through these personal contacts will we be able to sense the needs of the workers and their moods. The developing and deepening of these issues bring into motion many workers who we otherwise have no contact with.

A concrete example. Last February, 1931, when one Greek comrade in a department, through personal contact with a few workers, was able to mobilize quite a number of workers, without the aid of leaflets, through preparation of a committee inside that department, we were able to bring 135 workers to a meeting.

On the question of the *Daily Worker*: We are already beginning to make some movement in this respect. Our shop nucleus is taking steps to distribute the "*Daily*" inside the mill. Two specific days were picked out whereby our mill workers will send correspondence to the *Daily Worker* and the distribution will be made inside and outside the mill.

I think that in dealing with these seemingly small questions and experiences, my own opinion and the opinion of the comrades who helped me to prepare this report, is that we are really placing the work of this most important conference on the proper basis, on the basis that this will enable us to really set our teeth in several central problems and arrive at practical, tangible results which will result in a definite and noticeable improvement—and that is what we are here for!

Building Organization Thru Partial Struggles

I WOULD like to give a short report on a steel plant. In this town about a year or 14 months ago we did not have anything, just two or three Party members. Then two comrades from the district were assigned to work there. Now, after about 14 months time we have three shop units and two street units.

The steel unit, which is our concentration point is a very small unit, only organized something over a year ago. We had about 20 to 30 applications, a majority of them Negro workers. About a half of them now dropped out of the Party. Although the unit was organized in January, it did not function until June or July. Due to weaknesses of the section the unit died out. But, finally, the district hammered away and the unit was reorganized in June or July by the district. That is the time when I was assigned there. From July up till now we were able, through our shop bulletin, especially in July, to expose the bad conditions inside and we were able to force the company to stop docking the workers 25 cents from their pay every month for a club organized by the bosses. They are not going to deduct 25 cents any more out of the workers' fee, at least not unless he can make \$100 a month.

There were many small grievances—bad toilets and drinking fountains, also rough language at the works. They used oil cans, from which to drink the water. When we exposed this in the bulletins, the company was forced to give us galvanized water buckets and drinking cops.

In a safety meeting three or four months ago, in the department where I work we raised a lot of hell with the foreman and the bosses about the speed-up and unsafe conditions. Finally the bosses saw something was wrong so they tried to find out how all that came out. They fired one comrade a few weeks ago.

Did Not Utilize Hunger March to Strengthen Organization

At the plant until now, we had only about 40 members. We are a pretty good strong department group; in one department where I was working, eight members were in this group. We could have more members or solid groups in the plant if we would properly utilize the Hunger March in this steel section, that was mentioned yesterday by a few comrades. We had about 8,000 workers in the hunger march, or about 12,000 from the starting point, but what happened after this hunger march? These workers at the plant did not have a single leaflet after this hunger march, with the exception of two weeks ago, when we had a mass meeting in the section and there was a few hundreds leaflets distributed. But after the hunger march there was issued just one leaflet when we went to Pittsburgh to form the union. The workers would come to the headquarters and we would give them supplies and food but there were no leaflets to give them.

Developing United Front for Struggle Against Wage Cut

This section has many steel plants. The first wage cut was announced in October, 1931. News was spread on the inside that, when the workers will accept this 15 per cent wage-cut, there will be more days of work. This was the illusion that after the wage-cut there would be more work. The first wage-cut, the union was not on the job, but on the second wage-cut, we had a couple of mass meetings in the town. The workers were talking in the mill and said the mass meetings were against the wage-cuts. Of course, we were not strong enough to accomplish anything. Now, the third wage-cut is on the way; it is going to be some time this month, but not much later. What are we going to do on the third wage-cut?

We are preparing a united front conference which is going to be held this month. This conference, is to embrace all the organizations and all of our contacts. We have hundreds of contacts and we want to visit every one to establish department groups, general groups, to get all our contacts together and organize the Anti-Wage-Cut Committees.

At this plant I think there are only a little over 1,000 working part time, one or two days a week. The workers inside are all old timers working for 20 to 25 years. All the workers were in the steel strike of 1919. I spoke to many workers inside the mills, but they say they will not strike again. I asked why? They say, we have been fooled once. They collected \$5 and they sold us out. They are the same bunch now trying to organize. They will do the same thing as in 1919.

This is our weakness where we have to explain to these workers the difference between our union and the A. F. of L. I think in the near future, in spite of all this terror which is going on the last two or three months, comrades deported, many arrested at relief stations, and terrorizing and firing from the factory, we can develop struggles in the plant. I heard one comrade, in his opening remarks say we must safeguard our workers inside. I don't know, I was careful as much as possible and I was fired. If you want to do some work in the mill, you are not able to keep still inside. In my department, I was trying to keep quiet as much as possible, but I was fired anyway. Of course, in this struggle, you must tell the workers what to do, maybe not openly. In my department many workers waited for me to ask me question. They wanted to know how to get relief. Of course it is my duty to explain to them. And there will be many times in this section where Party members will distribute leaflets outside, from house to house. Well, that is exposure. Everybody knows everybody in the steel towns. So, I think one very important question in front of us is to establish methods whereby we can safeguard our workers in the shop.

Problems Faced in Building Organization in a Steel Town

I WANT to report a little on the work in a steel plant. About a year ago in this mill we had a group of about 150 in the Metal Workers Industrial League. This group from what I know and have heard, carried on work, not in the mills, but merely agitation work. They didn't take up any struggles and actually remained just an agitational group. For this reason, this branch of the union in the mill has fizzled out like so many others all over the country. We have been trying to reorganize these workers who have been in the union, but this is a slow process because many of them still have the old opinion of our work. We have a shop unit there of about eight or ten members.

And all of these comrades are Italian workers, a couple of South Slavs—that is all. It is very hard to get these comrades to do any work. Some of them will speak to people of their own nationality. They won't approach anyone else. And for this reason it is very hard to get contacts. A few cases where we have actually got contacts and made assignment they go and visit them, and they have seen them and recruited them into the Party—workers direct from the shops—not on the basis of carrying on shop work but just telling them that the Party is the workers' Party and not because the C.P. is in the shops.

Many of these comrades also do not take up the union seri-

ously enough. And it took a lot of talk to convince them the other way. They must build a union. We have succeeded in getting one group there only about 10 members to function regularly, to take up the shop conditions there and to carry on work on the basis of the conditions which exist there. Also, a group in another department of about twelve members. All these groups however have a bad feature, they are all Italian workers. Many of the workers are Slovaks, quite a few Croatians in the mill, but there have been no efforts made to get them. There are left wing organizations among the Croatians and these organizations should furnish us plenty of steel workers because practically all of these Slovaks and Croatians are steel workers.

The shop bulletin has been issued for the last couple of months in the mill taking up the conditions there. However, the shop bulletin hasn't been done collectively. The members of the shop unit cannot speak English, let alone write any articles for it. They tell me about the conditions, report in detail many instances of the conditions there, and what can be done, and I have to write the articles for them. And in this way they don't take enough responsibility, it appears as if they don't have anything to do with the shop bulletin, and it is not really issued by themselves. That is one thing we will have to correct.

The shop bulletin has created favorable comment in the shop. Last time the bulletin was issued I met a worker who had just come out of the mill and just received his bulletin. He told me that he had read of the Party quite a while and he would have joined it if he wouldn't lose his job. I explained to him that there is no danger of losing the job if we worked at it correctly. I convinced him. I got his address. He is an American born element—the only American contact. This just shows our lack of work inside the shops. Our comrades are afraid to talk while on the job. And this instance where I got this contact of the American born, if we have someone to talk and lead a discussion on the conditions we can get some work done there.

Now another point in the work, is unemployed work. This is very serious in our section. There is practically no unemployed movement, except a few small groups. We can see here as elsewhere, that without an unemployed movement you can't build the union. And it must be up to the union to build up this unemployed movement. We cannot separate the unemployed movement and the union as we have done up to this time. The union must have its unemployed branches and this is to carry on all the unemployed activity. And they must recruit directly into the union.

Now on the coming wage-cut. The comrade previously reported that we intend to have a united front conference to which we can draw these language organizations, the ones that are

under our leadership, and others. There is a possibility of getting delegates. The workers are already talking about this general wage-cut. And they are pretty sore about it. The wages amount to 22 cents an hour.

And the policy of the mill is to divide the work with all the workers, in many cases five and six hours a week at 22 cents an hour. And then they have to depend upon the small amount of relief they are able to get from the Welfare Relief organization. Also, in connection with the unemployed work in the section, the Musteites have succeeded in building quite a number of Citizens Unemployed League branches. A branch of unemployed with a membership of about 100, now is in the control of Muste. Due to our lack of work and organization in the entire section, Muste's organization is spreading throughout the section but mostly in the small farm rural towns. They are trying to spread their propaganda and build up Leagues in the steel towns and try to develop a movement of the workers. We must be ready to guard against this. We must show to the workers in these organizations that ours is the only correct program of action.

Need of Continuity in Work in Shops

THE main weakness in all our work in the shop is the lack of continuation once we have established some of our groups and our committees inside the shop. We seem to be able to get to a certain point in shop work and then we stop.

I want to take for example our experiences and examine one or two shops in which we have established fairly large groups at one time. However, because we were not able to continue the work, to know the next steps in developing struggles, training the members in the process of these struggles, the union groups today are practically non-existent.

In one steel plant we began work by first discussing with our comrades the various problems. On the basis of this we began to recruit for the union in the shop. In a few weeks we built up a union group of 45 to 50. In one section of this plant where 500 workers were employed we had 26 dues-paying members of the union. *This union was built because we took up with the workers the concrete grievances and the daily needs in the mill.*

For example, the safety shoes. The workers had to have safety shoes but were compelled to pay for them as much as \$3 and \$4 a pair. We raised the demand of free safety shoes. This stirred up workers who were not even in our organization. We began to raise this question at the safety meetings—and the demand was won. But we did not know how to go any further.

Know the Factory for Proper Leadership

We called meetings of our union, and what did we take up? We discussed the conditions in the shop. We were satisfied and they were satisfied that we had won something, but we did not discuss other grievances around which struggles could be developed. We were not sufficiently acquainted with the shop to be able to guide the workers to dig up additional grievances in the shop. The result was that for weeks we had meetings with the workers, discussed with them, took up the dues payments, various mass meetings that we held in the town, and week after week we could definitely see a decline in the attendance at the meetings and a decline in the membership.

We began to discuss the trouble. We found that as long as we were taking up the issues of the workers, we were constantly getting new blood. But when we did not discuss the actual grievances there was a decline in enthusiasm and in members in that particular mill.

We had the same thing in another mill. A mill of some 250 workers. In one department we had 75 per cent of the workers organized in our union. In fact, we were already discussing a strike situation. But today also here we have practically no organization.

In another steel mill we won the right for the Negro workers to buy coal. In this same mill some workers in one department, following the advice of our leaflets, organized a committee and went to the superintendent to protest a wage cut in the mill and also against the speedup. Alongside of that particular department we had Party and union members, but they did not know that such a movement was developing. Because our comrades did not give leadership to this movement and work out methods for presenting the demands the committee that went up to the boss was immediately fired and nothing happened in the shop.

Must Have Perspective for Struggle

We also seem to have a lack of objective when we go into a shop. Lots of times we start organizing groups in the shop because we are told to do so. We don't go there examining the conditions of the workers and setting ourselves a certain objective we intend to reach by developing the work. I think we must put forth an objective for the workers we are organizing. The demands we used to raise in the steel industry before—we set an objective there—we called upon the workers to organize and strike against wage cuts. What was the result? Certainly the workers saw clearly that it would be impossible to strike against wage cuts at that particular moment. They knew they had no organization and no leadership. In the steel mills, in our union, although we carried on some activity, it was very weak.

The whole thing looked like a mountain to the workers. They did not think and did not believe we could develop a strike, therefore, we did not develop any struggle around the issues of previous wage cuts that took place in the steel industry. Today we have learned something. In my opinion the slogan we have now on the question of the wage cut is better. We don't speak on the subject of strike, at least not now, not yet. We speak of defeating the wage cut.

This wage cut can be defeated, as we have already defeated a wage cut in one steel mill here. A 5 per cent cut was defeated two weeks ago without a strike. We started some agitation on the question of the cut and some discussion among the workers in the mill, and this in itself helped to defeat the cut. I think that certain demands, even a wage cut, can be defeated without a strike, especially if we call upon the workers by giving them leadership and guidance and first of all acquainting them with the union in the mill. The workers will not recognize the slogan as something impossible to achieve, and therefore this slogan that we put forth now about defeating the wage cut will depend to a large extent on how we develop the movement.

Initiative of Workers Suggests New Forms of Organization

I WANT to tell you about a certain struggle that was carried on without developing a strike in a shop in our district. This shop I am working in is a big shop that employs about 20,000 workers when it works full time and 5,000 workers at present.

In this shop there is practically no organization or union and to develop any fight against this wage cut we as yet have no forces in there. On that basis, we considered what could be done in that shop. The method we adopted is to develop small struggles where the comrades are working. I want to relate one experience where we got certain organizational results on the basis of small struggles.

Win 15 Minute Rest Period

In the place where I was working, we worked on a belt, that is, every worker did one operation on the belt. On this belt, every worker has to do a certain operation; he cannot go away from that belt while working because if he goes away the next worker can't do his work, and so on. When a worker has to leave his work for a minute, a relief man has to do that operation while he is away.

These workers for a long time were getting five minutes relief in the morning before lunch and five minutes in the afternoon. These workers were very dissatisfied and thought this wasn't enough time, and were kicking about it all the time. One day

we made a suggestion that all the men on that particular line should take fifteen minutes relief instead of five. All agreed that if every one would take fifteen minutes it would be easier to get away with it, than if only one worker did. Because if one worker did it the boss could do something—lay him off for a week and so on. I immediately seized that opportunity and pointed out to the workers that this was the only way we could get something in the shop, if we all stuck together, and the workers agreed.

The next time the relief man came around we told every worker in that particular group, when he went out, to stay for fifteen minutes. The relief man relieves one worker, then the next one, and so on. We told the workers to stay out for fifteen minutes and not to come back until the fifteen minutes were up. The workers agreed, and they did it. The relief man was very sore, and when he got through with this group of workers he took down all the names and took them to the foreman. But when the foreman saw the long list he had and all the names, he didn't even come over to tell the workers about it.

This way we gained the 15 minutes in the morning and 15 in the afternoon. I pointed out to the workers that this should convince them that only if we stuck together could we get anything. I told them if we were organized in some form or other we could get many other victories against grievances which affect all the workers in the shop.

Build "Stick-Together" Club

And there were many grievances there on the job and the workers agreed to that, and right at the place there we decided to form a "Stick-Together" Club. Many workers had the habit of telling the foreman of different things the other workers did. We decided one of the things we should do is not to be squealers, and the workers agreed to it. And the workers took the organization as their own because this organization arose on the basis of their own experiences and they knew it was their own organization.

Of course, this organization, after it was established, was very loose—only one group of workers in one particular section, who saw each other every day, and talked things over. We had no regular meetings or anything of the kind. But I had the perspective of broadening it out, consolidating it, making it the organizer of struggle, and then pushing it into a form of union organization. But shortly afterwards a lay-off came, and this organization did not function for some time.

After we came back, we tried to revive it, but could not do it on the basis of nothing at all. But certain grievances came up, which revived it. One day, one of the workers forgot to ring up his card and he was docked, and he was sore. The same question came up where the foreman came to collect money for the Red Cross. This was supposed to be voluntary, but it was

not. When the workers refused, the foreman wrote in the names, and the workers had to contribute. The workers did not like it, and we utilized this to establish the "Stick-Together Club," and our problem is to broaden it out and try to establish some stronger form of organization where the workers would be able to carry on work on a wider scale.

So far it involves one department and only young workers. But I want to say that one thing we have learned is that when I try to carry on work in that shop on the basis of direct Communist propaganda, bringing in newspapers to the workers, these workers were prejudiced against the Communists. No matter what I told them, the propaganda of the capitalist press was counteracting our propaganda. But on the basis of such a thing, we would establish a form of organization and the workers recognized it as something they organized, decided on, and that it was on the basis of their own experiences and grievances, and they knew it was their own organization.

Struggles of Unemployed Strengthens Shop Organization

FIRST, I want to give you a little picture of this steel mill. This mill at the present time has on its pay roll about 3,000 workers in the mill. The majority of these workers are working one or two days a week, sometimes one or two days a month. Most of them are foreign born workers—almost 65 to 75 per cent, are Polish, Ukranian, Croatians, etc. About one-fifth of the workers are Negro.

The situation in the mill at the present time is such that the major issue before the workers in the mill is the question of relief, since most of the workers are not even getting any pay. They work a couple of days a month and that pays their insurance which is compulsory in the mill and also pays up the company debts, which they owe to the company store. These workers who get this credit from the company store, go more and more in debt to the store and now you will find the situation where workers owe \$50 to \$100 to the company store.

When we started concentrating on this mill, we found ourselves with a small group of workers. These comrades, being foreign-born always had the excuse they couldn't do anything because there are no American workers in our union; we must get the Americans, then we will be able to work. They forgot entirely that 70 per cent of the mill was foreign born workers. The activities of this small branch of the union were mostly of a general character, putting out leaflets once in a while about general things, calling on the workers to join the union, calling a mass meeting, etc. One mass meeting was held and three workers were fired because they were at the meeting. The Union was not strong enough to put up a fight against this terror.

Party Members Begin Active Work

When we again seriously tried to get the job of working in the mill, the first thing we did was to get the Party members. With these comrades we discussed very seriously what is the major issue, the most important question to the workers in the mill, and the major question was the question of relief. We put out a leaflet on this question, the leaflet was distributed by unemployed workers on the day when most of the workers went after their relief, and this was very timely. Here they were getting the groceries, were dissatisfied, and we had this leaflet on relief. A discussion started when two members of our union were right among the workers and of course they helped to carry on the discussion and talk about the demands we raised in the leaflets.

What happened? As a result several days later, many workers went to the company welfare and raised the question of relief for the single men as well. The workers came to the welfare agency for more each week, some stayed there and wouldn't leave the office, asking for more than they were getting. Some of them got it. The mistake we made was not to follow up that demand and that fight for more relief. We just discussed it with the comrades, tried to approach these workers, and this is about all we have done after that.

This also brings up the question of the continuation of our work. Following up our demands with more struggles until we win the demands, and also raising other issues. The shop nucleus brought out a shop bulletin and here again we saw how the workers simply grabbed this bulletin. We found immediately as soon as the bulletin was put out the company was just running wild trying to find out where the bulletin came from. They put in an extra number of cops around the entrance to the mill. They even tried to look into the homes of some of our comrades who are pretty well known in the section where the mill is located.

We found that in spite of this terror that came as a result of the bulletin, workers in the mill were reading the bulletin. Some got together and read the bulletin right inside the mill.

We immediately began raising the question of new members and we found that almost every one of our members had connections, even though they were unemployed, who worked in the mill, probably a year ago or four or five months ago. They knew the workers personally, went around with them and so on. We discussed the question of getting these workers they know, get them into the union, give them something to read, keep in contact with them. By doing this work we got in a number of American workers whom the comrades thought it was impossible to get in before.

One of the comrades brought out the question of key men. This is a very important, serious and sometimes decisive question when it comes to a struggle. We spent a number of meetings

on this one point, in finding out where are the key departments also what are the possibilities in the shop, how many influential workers we have in these departments, workers who lead groups of workers and to whom the workers will listen and whom they will follow them when a strike breaks out.

Unemployed Struggle Building Union and Party

We find that without carrying on a struggle for unemployment relief we will be able to organize the workers. We find workers of the mill only working a few days; they are faced with eviction, have no gas, cannot send their children to school because they have no shoes, their children have no milk. We find that unemployed work helps us to build the Union and the Party. We have with us a comrade who came into the Union as a result of this work, came into the Party as a result of unemployed work.

We had a family who was going to be evicted. We found out about it, we organized block committees, and stopped the eviction. In our block committee we had a number of mill workers. In fact these workers were the leaders in the block committee. They accepted the responsible business of the committee. They were doing most of the work. We also went to the City Council and demanded shoes for the children of unemployed and part time workers. We won this demand, but unfortunately did not popularize it. As a result, we found a number of mill workers coming closer to our Union and to the Party.

Combine Struggle Against Wage Cut with Immediate Relief

On the question of the coming wage cuts. We are expecting a probable 10 per cent cut. This has not been officially announced but rumors are being spread among the workers. This coming wage cut is a big problem to the workers. Some say they are not working so they are not interested in it and the question of relief is important. The question of the wage cut cannot be raised without raising the question of relief with these workers.

In a discussion with the workers on the coming wage cut, a number of tentative plans were worked out. The question they have raised is, of course, the fight for relief. They raise the question of getting 50 per cent of their relief in cash. Why? Because they didn't get a cent in wages and they have no money to buy things—they have to buy salt, oil for their lamps, etc. They felt that this would be much easier to get than all cash relief instead of all groceries. They also proposed to demand an increase in relief, and this they did not settle definitely. They have not decided how much of an increase we are going to demand.

They brought out the question of compulsory insurance. They now have to pay \$1.10 a thousand or \$2.20 for two thousand.

They are forced to pay it out of their wages. We will demand that the insurance be paid by the company for all workers who work less than six days, also that insurance should not be lost if the workers are laid off or fired.

On the question of the united front to fight against the wage cut. We have discussed this with our branch. We have discussed in a way first, the question of organizing the anti-wage-cut committee. Well, comrades in fighting against the last cuts of October 1 and May 15 most of our work consisted in agitation and in this agitation we mainly brought out the question of organizing the strike against the wage cut. But we never took up with our members, how will we be able to help the workers in the mill to organize these anti-wage-cut committees, how to do it and how to go about it.

We have not really come to the basic issues, basic grievances of the workers, no definite perspective of developing immediate struggle in the shop. Right now we are beginning to do this and I believe that this united front campaign coupled with work inside the mill, will develop a fight for local grievances which will really bring definite results, about which we will be able to report very shortly.

Partial Struggle in a Metal Shop

I WORK in a metal shop which, during the war, produced bullets for the air service. This shop employs mostly women workers—55 per cent women—most of them Spanish. The wages in the shop average \$12 a week, but most get \$8, including some skilled workers.

First Steps in Building Organization

We tried to strengthen our work when we came there. First, at our unit meeting we took up the question of how to become personal friends with the workers. We started agitation inside the shop around the immediate grievances: low wages, speedup and the question of overtime. We visited some workers in their homes. We had one article in the *Daily Worker* during this period, and the article was pasted up inside the shop; also, there was a distribution from the outside.

During the election campaign we had a distribution inside the plant of the platform of the Party, in English and Spanish. During the period of the Hunger March, a non-Party worker collected \$8 on a list in his department. Workers contributed as high as 50 and 75 cents for the Hunger March. The total collection for the March was \$10. As a result of that we gained forty contacts on the Hunger March list.

Now on the question of the shop nucleus and the guidance

the Party gave us: First, the district did not call us in even once to discuss what we are doing in the shop. The section only for the last five weeks has given attention to our problems. But they paid attention only by sending a representative to the nucleus. But no work was carried on from the outside. The same is true of the union leadership.

We did not have department nuclei. We had a joint Y. C. L. and Party nucleus. We always met together. The comrades of the nucleus used to come to the union office almost daily. We did not bring forward the Party nor the Y. C. L. The League and Party members acted as union members. We did most of our work as union members, with the result that we recruited only one member into the Party during the three months, and that was on the basis of personal contact. We picked one of the best leaders in that group and recruited him into the Party.

Immediate Issues Basis of Partial Struggles

We conducted some partial struggles in the shop. First, in the ——— department, as a result of certain chemicals used, there was a very bad odor in the department. The comrades immediately raised the question that they could not work under such conditions. They mobilized the workers in that department and we had decided to stop work. On the basis of that, all the workers stopped for 10 or 15 minutes, demanding that they stop the use of that chemical. An hour later they changed it and the workers went back to work. This was a result of a sharp struggle. Through this we recruited eight members into the union.

Another struggle was conducted on the question of overtime work. The workers said they would not work overtime unless they were paid time and a half. They were also forced to work on holidays and sometimes on Sundays. The comrades, together with the other workers, demand that on holidays they get at least 50 cents lunch money. The boss refused to do anything, and the workers quit an hour and a half before the schedule, and the boss had to pay them for the hour and a half.

There was a girl in the shop who died as the result of an accident. We immediately issued a leaflet when the girl was injured. We put up a union lawyer and doctor on the job and they told us that we must have a private nurse for the girl. When we issued our second leaflet it was already too late—the worker had died. During the whole period the Party members did not respond, with the exception of one or two. On that day it happened that a special leaflet was issued calling the workers to the funeral. Certain Y. C. L. members were assigned to distribute the leaflets. The comrades overslept, and as a result the workers who wanted to come down did not know

where to come. Only in those departments where the comrades were active did we mobilize the most workers. Five new members were recruited as a result.

The last point I want to raise is on the question of our perspectives. In discussing this question with the comrades of the section committee, our perspective is to develop a struggle in that shop. We have quite a number of sympathizers for the movement. A certain situation developed in the shop where everybody was laid off for one week. Certain workers were told to come back the following week. On the day when these workers come back to work we will have to develop a struggle on the question of at least getting carfare. There are many tasks in the shop. The main thing is the concentration on the part of the section committee from the outside, together with the comrades from the inside, and I hope that as a result we will be the next shop to be entirely organized.

Railroad

Work Among Negroes in Railroad Industry

I WANT to deal principally with the experience we have had in organization in a railroad yard. In the past few months we have been able to establish an organization of dining car stewards, waiters and cooks.

This is important because it is the first real success we have had in organizing any number of Negro workers. In the railroad league we have had a number of Negro workers in different sections of the country, but they would come and go. We would make little successes at certain places which would last two or three months and finally disappear.

Unity of Work and Negro Workers

This movement, however, has been organized principally by workers on the job. We are able through one or two Party members to make contacts with some key workers in this particular department, and practically all of these workers have been organized right on the job. The contacts we made of Negro workers as well as some white workers with cooperation from the outside were able to build up this group around actual conditions on the jobs. We made the same mistake here as elsewhere by putting up general demands. But this was corrected. We took the old agreement of the Dining Car Employees, and with the cooperation of these workers were able to redraft it to include a number of new demands—to include special demands for the Negro workers.

Around these demands we are organizing the workers on a united front basis. Attempts have been made in the past to organize all dining room waiters, without any success. Now, because of the situation in the industry, where the conditions of all workers are being undermined, where Negro workers at lower wages are replacing in many cases white dining car stewards who received \$175 a month, the struggle for better conditions is uniting both Negro and white workers.

I will not go into the detail of the agreement. But, instead of going to these workers with leaflets and with our 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 general and abstract demands, we took this agreement and went over it with individual workers and formulated the tentative or proposed agreement, taking up the question of wages and working conditions in detail. We had this mimeographed and circulated in the cars. *Today we have two-thirds of the workers in the organization.*

Problems of Organization

Fifty cents a month is being contributed by the workers to what we call the "Organization and Negotiation Fund." We have set the goal that we organize on the basis of the grievances and for a fight to enforce the proposed agreement that was drawn up. We are calling upon the workers not to pay dues, but to contribute 50 cents a month to finance the organization work and the negotiations of this agreement.

There have been a number of difficulties in the work. The workers are constantly on the go. They are not in one place like shop workers. There is never a time when we can get more than a half of them together. We have opened a headquarters and we are attempting to draw in these workers when they come off the trains, so that we can be constantly in touch with them. We are organizing on the basis of car committees. We set up a committee of three on each car, developing little meetings as they go over the road. This is sometimes a very difficult problem, because one-third of the workers are on the job while one-third are sleeping and the others available for meetings.

Developing Struggle Thru Personal Contact

I THINK two points stressed at this conference are points which have not received too much attention by our Party, by our movement as a whole. I think that is one of the reasons why we haven't made as much progress as we could have made in the basic industries. The first point is the question of real personal contact with the workers in the shop.

In one railroad center, we have been putting out a bulletin

for about a year and a half. The workers like that bulletin, they eat it up, they grab it; for hours you will find them discussing that bulletin. But when you come to these workers, they want to know who you are. They know each other, they want to know who you are, and unless they know you and unless they know someone who knows you, you won't get into these places very easily. That is what is happening in this place.

Now I will give you another example. In one plant we concentrated for quite a while. We sold the *Daily Worker* for two weeks, at one time reaching a sale of 17. The company got wise to it and terror broke out. A lot of the workers who bought the *Daily Worker* must have been fired. We have never made any real personal contact with these workers. They didn't really know us, we didn't really know them.

How We Make Personal Contacts

I want to use one or two instances where, due to the fact that we have been able to develop personal contact, we have made the real beginnings of actually getting into the shop. There is a point where the railroad workers come to work. When I first joined the Party I was sent to sell the *Daily Worker* at that point. Three years later, when I began to do work on the railroad, we still didn't have any connections with these workers. My unit was assigned to get connections with these workers. About three blocks away from where these yards are there is a Negro territory. We figured if we would get into that territory we would find a large section of those workers living there. The comrades went out for six months with the *Daily Worker* and the *Liberator*, until they got workers they could really talk to. Little by little we won the confidence of a few of these workers. And then they built up a club, around these workers. Today this club has grown. Most of these workers are Negro workers. Most were working there at one time and have now been furloughed. However, there are some still working there. I know most of them. I can go into any of the houses, talk to their families. Now we have the basis for establishing a real organization.

I will give you another little example. We got connected up with a worker, an engineer. This worker was interested in our paper and movement. Now, after four months, when I am a personal friend of his, he tells me, "you know how I came into this movement. I thought it was pretty good. I wrote to a friend of mine in Chicago. He told me he thought it was O.K., so I came in." Before he came into the movement he wanted to find out who we were and he never came to us but wrote to a friend of his to find out. This fellow is against the reds and Foster in particular. But after doing a little bit of work there he came and told me that one of the fellows he had lined up is a red, who reads the *Daily Worker*. He has subscribed to the *Daily Worker* for about one or two years. I went to

see him a few weeks ago and found that there were three railroad workers reading the *Daily Worker*. One of these fellows I think still belongs to the Knights of Columbus, a good Irishman. He likes the *Daily Worker*, and I think if we do real work on them we could get them into the Party. This fellow that is against the reds has changed since he is working among them.

Small Group Can Develop Struggle

This brings me to the problem of leading the work in the shops in such a way that the small groups we have are merged in actions and are not picked out by the boss. If we do this, I think we can build strong and solid organizations everywhere. And I don't mean we need 30 or 40 workers before we can start. When I speak of struggle, I don't mean only strikes; even if a leaflet wins a demand for a worker, that is a form of struggle.

I want to bring out one concrete experience. We got connected with a certain worker who has a lot of influence in his shop. After a talk with this worker, he felt that the question of the speed-up was a burning question, and we felt that if we got a large group around the question of speed-up we wouldn't need a strong union organization. If we could get a couple of fellows to spread the word around, this would be enough to an extent to stop the speedup. This worker began to approach the workers to discuss ways and means of stopping the speed-up. This was two months ago. We got together seven workers and we used to meet right after work on the street corner around midnight. We had no other place to meet in, no hall, etc., because of the late hour. These fellows began to spread the word that we have to stop the speed-up and slow up a little. This began to take effect, to an extent. All the workers began to slow up. The company soon became aware of this slowing up, and they also knew we had organization. For a period of a month and a half they were able to stop the speed-up and the foremen were pretty much stumped and wouldn't get very far, because we had a solid bloc.

Well, we still have seven or eight workers who meet at midnight, outside the place, but because we were able to develop a movement which didn't involved only a small group, we were able to win the sympathy of these workers and show them that we can get somewhere.

Carry the Struggle Against War Into the Shops

IN the resolution on the war in the Far East and the tasks of the Communists in the struggle against imperialist war and military intervention against the U.S.S.R., the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. points out that "the period of relative stabilization in international relations has ended; that the attack of Japanese imperialism on China which is taking place with the full and open support of France and with the secret support of England, marks the beginning of a new imperialist war." It pointed out how the U.S.A. is striving to provoke war between Japan and the Soviet Union in order that by weakening both Japan and the U.S.S.R. it may strengthen its own position in the Pacific.

The Party manifesto, issued in January, 1933, shows that war is already going on in the Far East, in Latin America. It exposes the aim of the Japanese army through the occupation of Jehol to reach the Soviet border all along its Asiatic frontier. It exposes the League of Nations as an instrument of war and the Second International as shamelessly preparing to repeat in the coming imperialist war the present role of the Japanese social democracy as betrayers of the working class. Billions are being spent in a new race of armaments, and other millions are being spent for peace conferences that have been following each other in the last years as a camouflage for war preparations (while in the U. S. A. and in the other capitalist countries millions of workers are out of jobs, millions of farmers are at the mercy of bankers, burdened by heavy mortgages, taxation, debts, etc.). The manifesto calls upon the toilers of the United States to increase the struggle against developing imperialist war.

Weaknesses in our Anti-War Campaign

If we examine our anti-war campaign conducted in the last year, then we must come to the conclusion that we have not taken all measures to reach wider masses of the toiling population. We did not yet succeed in bringing the campaign among the workers in the factories; that the Party and the trade unions did not concentrate with vigor in the industries which can be mobilized for the conduct of war, such as metal, chemical and transport; that we did not spread our campaigns to the millions of farmers among whom the anti-war sentiment strongly prevails; that we did not reach the masses of American youth and the masses of women in industry with our anti-war campaign.

Our campaign still remains to a great extent a purely agitational campaign. Yes, such agitation must be followed up and extended. *But this agitation campaign and the propagandist activities must be followed up by the revolutionary work of the Party among the masses, by concrete work. At this stage our task is to concretize the slogan of setting up anti-war committees in every shop, in the neighborhoods and workers' organiza-*

tions, to concretize the slogan of stopping the shipment of munitions, to concretize the slogans of demonstrating against the bloody Japanese imperialist bandits and in support of the heroic Japanese revolutionary workers, to demonstrate against the imperialist war-makers of Wall Street and Washington. It is necessary now more than ever before to develop the struggle against the capitalist offensive to lower the standard of living of the masses. All these struggles must be linked up *with the anti-war struggle*. (These struggles will facilitate the setting up of anti-war committees in the factories, in the mass organizations), on a neighborhood scale, among the unemployed. But this in itself is not sufficient. It is not only through economic struggles that we develop anti-war activities. It is also necessary to develop the political struggle and specific activity against war.

Build Anti-War Committees in the Shops

Today more than ever before we must intensify our activities toward penetrating the factories and building the shop nuclei, one of whose major tasks will be the winning of the masses for our anti-war struggle. This is one of the fundamental organizational tasks of the Party particularly at this moment. Special attention shall be concentrated on building shop nuclei in ammunition factories, in the shipyards, in the railroad centers, in other branches of transport, in factories that can be easily transformed into war plants (auto, chemical, rayon, etc.). In this respect the districts must have a clear program of action.

The setting up of anti-war committees cannot be accomplished in a mechanical manner. In certain factories or mass organizations, in the neighborhoods, such committees can be set up legally, after an intense ideological campaign among the masses. In other factories, such as ammunition plants, shipyards, etc., according to the situation, such committees can be set up illegally or semi-legally. In this respect we must work out the methods of how to get contacts, how to utilize the contacts inside the plants, how to spread anti-war literature among the workers, etc.

Develop Partial Struggles

In all industries, including the war industries, wages are slashed and on the basis of the continuous rationalization workers are laid off. In addition to the development of the struggle against the wage cut, we must arrange demonstrations of solidarity of the employed and unemployed workers. In the shipyards, for example, where workers are laid off, we must rally the laid-off workers and draw them into the struggle for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and utilize their connections to reach the masses still inside the plants. In the war plants it is of special importance to develop struggles against wage cuts, speed-up and around other grievances in

the plant. Here such struggles are in actuality a struggle directed against the government.

In the anti-war campaign all forces of the Party must be mobilized; nuclei, street units and fractions in all mass organizations, and especially in the revolutionary trade unions, in the unions of the A. F. of L. for the conduct of an intensive anti-war struggle inside the unions, to set up anti-war committees, to lead the workers especially in metal, chemical, marine in the struggle to hinder production of ammunition and war material in general. For months and months, from the ports of New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk, New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle, transport after transport has left for the Far East and Latin America loaded with ammunition or raw material to be used for war purposes. While the American bourgeoisie is talking about a boycott against Japan, Mr. DuPont realized a profit of 37 million dollars in the last year. Shipments of cotton, scrap iron, chemical stuffs, etc., to Japan are continuing this year.

During this year two or three demonstrations took place in different ports of the United States against the transportation of ammunition to Japan. The working class has not yet succeeded in stopping one single shipment. It will succeed in the near future, if the Party, the Marine Workers Industrial Union, the militant workers among the railroad men, among the longshoremen will concentrate with all forces to rally the masses for action, repeating the heroic struggle of the Seattle longshoremen in 1919. In every port of the United States anti-war committees must be built among the longshoremen, among the sailors and seamen; anti-war committees on board ships especially those which take the route of the Far East and Latin America.

Stop the Shipment of Ammunition

An immediate task for the shop nuclei, for individual Party members working in shops, metal plants, chemical factories, shipyards, on the waterfront, is to keep their eyes open and see what is being produced, what is being shipped, what steps are being taken by the bosses for the transformation of the industry into a war industry, etc. The nuclei, individual Party member, sympathizers should discuss immediately these problems with the most conscious of the workers in the plants, bring to the knowledge of the whole factory crew what is going on, through leaflets, legal or illegal gatherings—according to the situation. One of the tasks is the exposing of the concrete facts of war preparations in the industries, in the press which will become valuable issues around which to mobilize large masses and bring the anti-war struggle into the factories, to the docks, railroad centers, aboard the ships. On the basis of such information, shop gate meetings, anti-war demonstra-

tions shall be arranged in front of the plants. Real efforts must be made to stop the shipment of ammunition.

This activity will spur the initiative of the masses, of each individual, each Communist, each sympathetic worker who is conscious of the necessity of fighting against war in the places of work; will spur the building and extending of the net of anti-war committees which must become instruments of vital importance for the mobilization and organization of the masses in the anti-war struggle.

—F. B.

How to Win Leadership of the Workers

I WORK in a foundry. We have had four direct wage cuts. Now they introduce another system—piece-work. Each worker used to make between 50 and 60 cents an hour, and now he makes 30 cents an hour doing the same work. The workers have not been organized in the shop at all.

Last summer there was somebody who distributed leaflets there, and there was a little news in the *Daily Worker* about the shop, but I could not find anybody who was doing the work. *Later on I found that I wouldn't be able to do anything until I joined an organization. So I joined the Unemployed Council—and then the Party.* Then we started to work in the shop. We organized a group in the factory, but some stool-pigeons exposed the workers who attended, and they were fired.

We started to organize workers in our department alone. And so far we have ten workers ready to join the union. I also have two fellows ready to join the Party.. Here is the way I got the fellows together. They have a scheme in the shop here to replace workers at lower wages. Instead of a German they have a Pole. The Polish worker who takes the job gets his wages cut. I explain this to the workers at dinner time. I tell them that we have to organize so that the company can't take advantage of us. The workers begin to listen to this. And I bring the *Daily Worker* and leaflets, and give it to them.

One time it was very cold there—no heat. We have to take a bath in the shop because we get so dirty, but we can't. We couldn't eat our dinner—so cold in there. About ten fellows sitting down came and I said: "How about electing a committee to see Mr. ———." They laugh at me. "They won't give it to you," they say. But we finally convinced them. So two fellows went. We told the boss that the fellows get sick. The boss promised the heat. The fellows laughed at us, not believing we would get the heat. At 2 o'clock heat was coming in. I go around to the workers. They see heat is on. Then, the next day, there is no heat. The workers come around and say to me, "Where is the heat?" I meet the boss and tell him the heat is shut off. He said, "No." Well, I said, there is no

heat in there. He said, "Well, you better see the man who takes care of it." I find out that the heat was not shut off, only pipe stuck. So the workers now trust me.

I tell them we got to organize against the wage cut. They tell us they were going to cut our wages 10 per cent. The workers were getting \$4. Now they are going to cut 35 cents. It takes a day and a half to make that \$4. Some of the workers earn as little as \$2 in two weeks. I have seen checks between \$2 and \$4 for two weeks. I tell them they would be even better off if they get relief from the relief bureau. So I tried to organize. They say it is impossible to organize now with so many unemployed. I ask them if he want a job with four children and a wife to feed like this.

One worker who I first thought was not responsible proved to be a good contact. I had to do some work for him and then I started to talk to him, and he said he didn't give a damn for the job. He said he would rather be on the relief. He came to our meeting, and now all our department is going to be organized except five fellows whom I suspect. I am going to make the others join the Unemployed Council and maybe later the Party.

Systematic Work in Shop Leads to Struggle

SEVENTEEN months ago I came into the Party. I was an unemployed worker. Since then I have carried out some work outside, but recently I succeeded in getting a job in a factory, after about 14 months' unemployment. I got a job in a fur factory. In this factory there were 130 workers, 30 of them organized by the left wing industrial union. For seventeen years this shop had been unorganized. Another comrade was working in the shop for six months. His department had only seven workers. He told me when I came into the shop that almost all of his department was organized by him. All agreed to stick together when the time comes for future struggle.

Making Personal Contacts

When I went into the factory the boss paid me 35 cents an hour. A young worker came to me and asked me: "How much does he pay you?" I told him. He said: "I work here three years and I get the same." I said: "I was going to ask for a raise." I asked him: "Are you going to do that, too?" He said: "I went three months ago, but the boss ignored me." I told him: "If you had not told me that, maybe I would go. But since you told me, I won't." He said: "What are you going to do?" I said: "I am going only when you and I and everyone goes." He said: "You can do nothing, because everyone are dumbbells." I said: "I don't think so." I then said: "Who do you think is the worst man here?" and he pointed

out one man named M———. I said, "I am going to prove that this man will say the same thing about you as you say about him."

I went to this man and he wouldn't talk very much. Then I began to tell this worker that I felt tired. He didn't answer. I asked him: "Do you feel tired?" He said: "Well, what are you going to do?" I said: "No one says anything here." And he said: "No. Everyone is a bunch of damn fools." I said: "Did you hear that?" It happens that this man gets only 20 cents an hour. He said: "How much do you get?" I said I got 35 cents. He replied: "Yes, I know. But I got a big family. If I say anything they will kick me out." I said: "What about you and me and him and the girls and the others getting together and talking about it?"

Individual Contacts Builds Organization

Another worker was hired the day after myself and he got 20 cents an hour. By Saturday he had worked more hours than I had and he got less money. He said: "I don't come to this job any more." It took me about two hours to convince the worker that he should go back to the shop. I said: "I've got two more workers, and you and I make four. The boss fooled you, and so we are going to fool him." "In that case I will come back to the shop," he said.

I started to work very hard, especially when the boss came. The worker said: "You talk too much, and now you work more than anyone." I said: "Tomorrow I will tell you why I work so hard. Later I talked to the boss. I told him I have a friend, his wife is very sick and he has a big family and he is not working. And the boss said: "If he is like you, then he can come in."

So I said to the workers: "We got another worker with us." Then I got still another. His father, a foreman, went to the hospital. He was replaced by someone else. This boy doesn't like the foreman because his father cannot go back on the job. I speak to him. He said: "If you think we can do something I stick with you." So we got together about eleven workers.

Strike Struggle Victorious

The day came when the boss tried to do some trick among the organized workers. The union called a strike. "If you want," I told them, "I will pull the department in the morning."

I didn't sleep all night. I thought: "I have ten workers, but there are nine more there. Maybe the others won't want to come out." I went into the shop in the morning. I said to the workers: "The union backs us up; what about it? The workers agreed. We told them: "We are on strike; you should stop." The workers agreed.

So we went on strike. The other comrade came along, all alone. I told him: "Now, I come out, with my department."

And we started. After two days we got the whole shop out on strike. The first thing, I got the *Daily Workers* and gave them around. *We had there Negro and white workers. We picked the best ones and put them in the leadership, like one American fellow, who is a Party member now, chairman of the shop. We elected him chairman of the strike committee, and another, a Negro comrade, too, and in that way we succeeded in having now in that shop a nucleus composed of 16 workers; 9 Party members and 7 Y. C. L. members. There are six Americans, four Negroes and two white American workers.*

A Proper Method of Leadership

I AM going to deal with the situation in the mines of ———.

About a year ago I was sent in by the ——— district of this territory. When I got there, the conditions were pretty bad in our organization. We could not accomplish anything. I was on the section committee and we discussed how we could get into the mine and organize mine groups and mine units. I proposed that one of our leaders should get a job in the mine and begin work from the inside. The section committee decided that if anyone could get a job in the ——— mine we should go in there. I took the chance and I got a job there. We started with the work, but could not make much progress.

While I was working in the mine some wage cuts took place. First the cutters received a slash of five cents. The next month they cut the day men, especially the shot firers, etc. A few weeks later they gave a wage cut to the drivers. They split the wage cuts because if they would have given a general cut the workers would have struck.

I took this up with two Party members in the mine and I proposed that we should issue leaflets and expose how the bosses were putting over the cut. When the leaflets were distributed inside the mine, the miners started talking. It reached the bosses and they began to investigate who was responsible. At the same time they were going to cut the drivers 25 cents a day. I saw a couple of drivers and told them that they should get together and talk the matter over. If necessary, I told them, I would come to the stable. They said this would expose me and they could handle it alone. They called in all the drivers and refused to accept the wage cut. The result was that on the day they were to be cut they put signs not to start work. We got notice in the mine that the drivers were staying out. I told the workers that if the drivers went out, we should go out with them. This went around like wildfire. We all got up and the assistant boss stood right there. He called the superintendent and said that he would have to do something about it or the entire mine would walk out. The superintendent

came and told the drivers to go back to work—that their wages would not be cut. We popularized this, and the result was that we got 16 union members and we increased the Party unit to 8.

About a month later, they started another wage cut on the machine men. The big boss came around and told them that instead of 65 cents they would get 60 cents. The machine men would not take action on it. I tried to talk to a couple of them, but they said we are only 12 and if we would go out we would not get the support of the other workers. We could not convince them, and they accepted the cut.

The bosses then went around to the others and told them if they want to work in the mine they will have to load more clean coal. The big boss said, "When you load the car don't lay them on the long side but on the wide side." This meant that they have to put another ton of coal on the car. The workers could not see that this was a wage cut. We issued leaflets, but it had very little effect on the miners. They laid off 120 men from the mine. When they started to lay off the men, we spread the news about a new wage cut. And the wage cut did come, another ten cents. When the machine men accepted this cut, the day men received a cut of another 15 to 18 per cent. We got busy with leaflets. But it did not help.

A few days later we had a general cut. When this happened we issued leaflets and called a meeting last Sunday. When the company found out that the National Miners Union had a meeting they said the mine would not work until the new year. We visited the workers and got them together on the basis of this. They all voted to come out on strike after the new year, when they returned to work.

The Bolshevik Policy of the United Front

Excerpts from the Speech of Comrade Kuusinen at the Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.

THE proletarian united front, in the Bolshevik sense, is a militant agreement between the conscious revolutionary Communist vanguard and the not yet revolutionary masses of the toilers. Only the immediate practical aims of the present class struggles of the proletariat, the actual action slogans of Communist policy, can serve as a political platform for the formation of this militant agreement, not the principles of the Communist program which are, as yet, incomprehensible to the non-Party and reformist workers, but which ought to be popularized among them during the course of the actual partial struggles. As an organization form for creating the united front from below, that is, for linking up the Communist vanguard with the broad masses, only the forms of proletarian democracy can

be used, not the much more highly centralized forms of Communist Party organization. The policy of the united front consists precisely in the correct employment of the forms of proletarian democracy; the correct policy of the united front consists in making the best use of the forms of proletarian democracy for the purpose of revolutionizing the majority of the proletariat.

"In this general sense, the tactics of the united front from below represent the line which must be followed in the entire work of the Communist Parties in agitation and in mobilizing the masses (in the press, in every campaign, in every case of mass direct action, in the daily work, in the shops, and trade unions, among the unemployed, among proletarian women, young workers, etc.). In its *special* sense, the method of the united front should take the form of a Communist organization approaching either in its own name or otherwise—all the workers employed in a given enterprise or locality, district, or trade, or in the most important cases, throughout the whole country, with the proposal to carry out a joint mass action around some definite concrete question.

"Such united front initiative should comprise short and lucid practical proposals as to what sort of action is involved, what is to be done, what demands are to be voiced, and how the workers are to make decisions on the initiation, the leadership, the further conduct, and conclusion of the given action. Every united front initiative of this kind should be supported by an intensive preparatory campaign among the masses. In such cases, it is also possible to approach the members of a definite trade union organization (or of several trade unions), on occasion also the worker-members of other political or cultural proletarian organizations. This constitutes the special method of the united front from below. This method does not pre-suppose, but on the other hand, does not preclude the possibility, that in special exceptional cases a Communist proposal of unity may be sent to a lower trade union organization as such, or even to a local social democratic organization; this, however, must be most rigorously checked in each particular case (and in my opinion should not be undertaken without the express consent of the Party leadership). The tactical expediency of such a step depends, above all, on how far we can keep the initiative in our own hands, and how far we are in a position to create organizational key-points for ourselves among the masses during the course of such a united front action; we cannot reckon on any success unless we are able to accomplish really systematic Communist fractional work in the development of such an action.

"The Bolshevik policy of the united front is not a 'bloc' policy; it does not mean 'making peace' with the social

democratic or reformist leaders (as the renegades of Communist, Brandler, Trotsky and others would have it). All opportunistic tendencies in this direction (for example, glossing over the differences with the reformist leaders who, it is alleged, are becoming 'revolutionized') should be most decisively rebuffed. The united front of the Communist and non-Communist workers *against* the bourgeoisie, must be unequivocally contraposed to the social democrats' policy of the united front *with* the bourgeoisie. The whole meaning of the Bolshevik united front lies, firstly, *in the class struggle against the bourgeoisie*, and secondly, *in isolating the agents of the bourgeoisie from the mass of the proletariat.*"

"To organize on a sound basis constant Bolshevik work among non-Communist workers in the factories, in the reformist and other trade unions, and among the unemployed, and systematically to expose the treachery of the social-democratic and reformist leaders, and to win over the workers who have come under the influence of the fascists."
(From the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Resolution.)

Struggle Against Social Fascism Condition for Shop Struggles

Editorial

THE Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I. closely linked up the question of undermining and smashing the influence of social democracy with the development of the struggles for the every day economic and political interests of the broad masses. In the development of mass work in our Party there is too much of a division between the development of struggles for the every day economic and political interests of the masses and our struggle against social fascism. This is particularly seen in our shop work. Because we do not see any social fascist organization within various shops, we underestimate the influence which reformism and social fascism, exercises upon the workers, and we do not consider social fascism as a factor and force which we have to reckon with in our shop struggles. We cannot develop the struggles for the immediate needs of the masses unless we conduct a constant fight against social fascism.

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Our weakness in the recent growing strike struggles in Detroit are primarily due to the underestimation of social fascism within the shops. Members of the I. W. W. and Socialist workers became chairmen and served on some of the most important

strike committees. These workers, misled by social fascism, have brought into the leadership I. W. W. and Socialists who are playing a strike breaking role. Because of our failure to carry on a consistent exposure of the social fascists in our daily activity in the shop in preparation for the strike and to differentiate between social democratic leaders and workers, which is also noticeable in our agitation and propaganda, these Socialist and I. W. W. workers who are working in the struck plants, have fallen victims to their social fascist leaders.

The lack of a political approach in our shop work is most evident in our wrong application of the policy of the united front. The policy of the united front must precisely be based on developing organization and struggles involving workers who are under the influence of reformist unions and social fascist organizations, involving the workers who are still under the influence of the open bourgeois parties. In developing these united front activities based on the immediate grievances of the workers, the sharpest fight must be carried on against social fascism. Had this been the case in our shop activities in Detroit workers would not so readily come under the influence of social fascism.

Our wrong approach to Socialist workers is also seen in the just complaint of Socialist workers who attended the Lenin Memorial meetings in Milwaukee. These Socialist workers complained against our comrades for calling them yellow-bellied Socialists and adopting a hostile attitude towards them.

Once the strike in Detroit began to grow, all shades of social fascism appeared on the scene to head this strike in order to behead it. Because of the fact that the American Federation of Labor in Detroit lacks the same organizational strength as for instance in New York and Chicago, the comrades underestimated the danger of the strikebreaking leadership of the American Federation of Labor in the auto industry.

The wrong conception which underestimated the reformism are linked up with the wrong policies which lead to the abandonment of our work in the reformist unions. This is clearly reflected in the underestimation of social fascism in the shops. There was hardly a single strike in the past period, either of a spontaneous nature or those led by the red unions, which did not immediately face the question of fighting the strikebreaking leadership of the A. F. of L. and social fascism.

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In the development of struggles, in leading strikes, in our shop work, we particularly underestimate the danger of "left" social fascism. The comrades at the shop conferences have reported how the Musteites are making attempts to penetrate some important sections of the steel industry, railroad, metal, etc.

In our work amongst the miners it is necessary to fight decisively against the sectarian approaches which deny the im-

portance of building opposition groups in some sections of the U. M. W. A. and in the newly established Progressive Miners of America.

In our fight against social fascism it is necessary to remember what the Twelfth Plenum pointed out that we must particularly expose the maneuvers of the "left" social fascists. An expression of a conciliatory attitude towards left social fascism is seen in the resolution of the Chicago District Committee of September 17 which says:

"While the miners took over most of our demands and proposals for carrying on the struggle, we were not able to *out-manoeuvre the right and unconscious reformist elements . . .* The task is establishment of the united front of the miners, supporters of the Progressive Miners of America, while at the same time criticizing those leaders who attempt to narrow down or break the strike . . ."

Instead of pointing out that "left" social fascists are particularly dangerous, the differentiation is made between conscious and "unconscious" reformists. In our struggle against social fascism, we must defeat those tendencies which fail to strictly differentiate between social democratic leaders and workers, and those tendencies which favor the united front from the top (unity at any price.)

These major weaknesses of our shop work were clearly revealed in the discussion at the two shop conferences. The fact that these two conferences hardly discussed the question of our struggle against social fascism emphasizes the point that we have not as yet recognized that in our struggle to win the workers in the shops we must conduct a relentless fight against social fascism. Comrade Browder in his summary remarks at the Chicago regional conference very well stated the problem:

"Then, too, that aspect of politicalizing our shop work, which is represented by the struggle against social fascists, against the Socialist Party and the Musteites, the A. F. of L. leadership, renegades, etc. It is quite true, as some comrades said, that this has been neglected in the discussion. *As work in the shops comes to a higher stage of struggle, we are inevitably faced with the problem of struggle against social fascists, and that it can be so much neglected shows the low development of our shop work.* Surely one cannot speak of winning the miners of Illinois without speaking of an intense struggle against social fascism every step of the way. Neither can one speak of progressing very far even in those industries which are entirely unorganized, except in terms of meeting and defeating the influence of the social fascists. There will never be a time when our work progresses to large mass activities in these industries that the social fascists will not appear. They will appear in a very strong position, because they come in not alone on the basis of getting among the workers themselves,

but they come in with the cooperation and assistance of our class enemies, the bosses. The conquest of the shops by our forces can only be accomplished as a result of the defeat of the A. F. of L. and the S.P." (Complete speech printed elsewhere in this issue of the *Party Organizer*.)

In the pre-convention discussion the problem of developing shop work must stand in the center in the development of our mass work. The question of our struggle against social fascism should therefore be taken up in relation to the entire question of developing shop work, shop struggles, and in the growing strike movement and struggles.

Work in An A. F. of L. Local

I AM going to say a few words about work in the A. F. of L. In our city we have a Machinists union composed of about 4000 good standing members. They are divided into various locals. I belong to a local composed of about 400 members. About 200 members are still working in the shop, some full time, some part-time, and some overtime. Last May our agreement expired and there was no organization so far as we were concerned except for a few individuals, because Party had only a few members before the wage cut. When this happened some were expelled and some took the position that we will organize a new union and to hell with the A. F. of L.

The question of voting on the new agreement, which was a 15 per cent cut or from \$1.00 an hour to 85 cents came up. Our constitution provides that before we can go out on strike 75 per cent of those working in the shop have to vote for it, then we can go out on strike. The 2,000 men out of work were not allowed to vote on the agreement. Only those working in the shops were allowed to vote. And as I said before, without any organization as far as the left wing group is concerned, the wage-cut was put over by two votes. We failed to get the 75 per cent by two votes. And nobody could find out who voted for the cut.

Now, I want to say a few words about my local. After the big splash that we made in the Machinists Union a few years back, after a few heads were busted and a few of us got expelled, we simply forgot that there is a Machinists Union and we simply let them do whatever they pleased. During the last few months, the Party began to move towards the work in the A. F. of L. and that forced me to be more regular at my meetings and more active. The first question I raised in the A. F. of L. was the question of relief. My idea was that we should elect a committee in the local and demand relief for the workers there. The district of the union went on record taking 10 per cent of the wages of the men working and distributing it to all men there. So one week it might be \$1.00

the next week \$2.00, etc. And some locals had money, thousands of dollars. The men were insisting that the 10 per cent should not be taken from their wages.

The District Council recently decided to withdraw that assessment and asked the workers to voluntarily donate certain parts of their earnings to the unemployed.

The next problem that came up was the question of the 50 per cent cut in relief. We received a communication on it and the president threw it into the waste basket. I made a motion that the local goes on record for the Hunger March and that we send a protest against the 50 per cent cut in relief and also to send delegates to the conference. He asked who send me there and so on. I told him I was a worker and finally the chairman refused to entertain the motion. But the membership there decided that they are going down to the conference and three rank and file members came and were seated as visitors. At the next meeting there was fireworks, the members protesting against the A. F. of L. I pointed out the reason why the Federation of Labor in the city was not protesting against the relief cut because two of the leaders were serving on the relief commission. In the course of these activities we brought in the question of the Unemployed Council.

We have today quite a few of the machinists who are members of the Unemployed Councils. At the last meeting when our funds were exhausted to the last dollar they asked how about relief. The members said to hell with the union, etc., we will go to the Unemployed Council. One fellow got up and said he did not care whether it was a Communist organization or not, that he needed relief and the got it for him. In my local they have a group of eight or nine fellows who are in the Councils. We are trying to elect a committee in the local to work with the neighborhood Unemployed Council to get relief for the members of our local. One fellow for instance who we thought was not so good, who was against the Communists, asked me where the Unemployed Council met. I told him, he went there and now he is getting more people to come with him to the Unemployed Council.

On the question of the A. F. of L. and unemployment insurance. We went to visit certain organizations, those we know are more or less radical and we will work with them on this. We called conferences, but we failed to keep in touch with our connection and the groups and we are now trying to overcome our weakness in this work.

Fighting A. F. of L. Leadership in the Shop

BEFORE I speak on the shop nucleus I want to say two words on the impression of this conference. I think this conference is of great importance to all of us, and I for one feel that I have learned a lot from this conference. If conferences of this sort would be organized at least every three months, where we could exchange our experiences, we can certainly accomplish a lot.

I represent a needle trades nucleus in a shop of 125 workers. About a year ago this shop was one of the best millinery shops in the needle trades due to the work of the comrades in the shop. What have really been the accomplishments of the Party members in this shop? We have kept up this shop under the best conditions in the trade. We have kept up this shop until the last minute, when the industrial union as such was wiped out of the trade. We have smashed the leadership of the Lovestoneites in the shop. This shop is now under the control of the A. F. of L. and here the method of work has changed to the method of opposition work. What is the situation in this shop and what are the methods of work of the opposition?

After the stoppage, due to the militancy of the comrades in the shop, the A. F. of L. union was not in a position to put through all their fake agreements immediately and they were compelled to give us conditions in that shop where we actually got increases in wages, while in other shops they got cuts.

We had a group of 12 workers, non-Party members, consisting of two branches in the shop. In the third branch we have not succeeded in getting workers in officially. However, we have connection with the workers in that department.

The A. F. of L. leadership made an agreement with the bosses to shut down the shop in order to force down the conditions. This to a great extent ended our work. The workers were terrorized and under the fear of losing their jobs were ready to submit to anything in order to keep their jobs. They were told that the shop was shut down completely. And here I want to stress what methods we have used in order to give leadership as the Party nucleus to the workers in this shop. We have been around the factory every day. We met with the workers and with one branch of the shop we had a party where we had 20 girls, who were the most backward elements of the shop. We made them feel that we were their friends, and gained more confidence than we had before. We also organized group meetings during the three months the shop was closed down.

We discussed how to organize joint meetings of all the branches. They did not allow all the branches of the shop to meet together to take up their problems. We have succeeded in having during the time a joint meeting, warning the A. F. of L. officials against a reorganization in the shop, which was the main purpose for closing down the shop, to get the Communists and sympathizers out of the shop. We succeeded in preventing

the reorganization. However, we have failed in one thing, and I want to stress it here.

We have reached a point where some of the workers were terrorized to such an extent, that they accepted a wage cut of 50 per cent in order to come back to the shop to work. In the next department it happened that the workers got an 11 per cent wage cut and also agreed to work single time over time.

The third department, the trimming department, of which our nucleus consists has changed from week work to piece work. Here we were not able to mobilize the workers to fight these conditions. We were not in a position to mobilize the workers to take a stand to fight this situation in the shop. It is my opinion, due to the general situation in the trade, being that we have not learned yet the correct approach how to really begin to break this terror in the trade, in order to mobilize the workers to fight against these conditions. This in my opinion is a very great shortcoming.

I want to report that we did succeed in organizing a class during the time when the shop was closed, a class on current events and also on the History of the American Labor Movement. We feel from these classes we will be able to draw in more workers than we could probably get to a meeting. We get them to the class and through the class also take up the shop problems with them. We have also succeeded during the time when the shop was closed down to break away some of the active elements of the A. F. of L. union in the shop that were working in the organization committee for the A. F. of L., and recruit them in our group.

Work in Reformist Unions

The consistent every-day struggle of Communists and supporters of the revolutionary trade union movement for the establishment of the united front of the workers urgently raises before all the section of the Comintern and of the R.I.L.U. the question of work *inside* the reformist trade unions and the *methods* of this work. The influence of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, especially in countries with long established and strong reformist trade unions, is one of the chief hindrances to the development of class struggle, and cannot be broken down by shouts about wrecking the trade unions, for which Communists are not striving, nor by deserting the trade unions, but by persistent work inside the reformist trade unions by fighting hard to win every member of the reformist trade unions, for every elected post in the trade unions, for securing the dismissal of the reformist trade union bureaucracy and winning over the local organizations of individual trade unions and the local trade union councils of the reformist unions. (From the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Resolution on Lessons of Economic Struggles).

Building Revolutionary Organization in a Reformist Controlled Shop

I REPRESENT a shop nucleus in a needle trades shop. It is a dressmaking shop under the jurisdiction of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. There are 160 girls working and about 45 men.

I want to touch mainly on three points; the work of the shop nucleus, the relation to the trade union work, and our perspectives.

Build I. L. D. Branch and Vote-For-Foster Club

The work of the shop nucleus has improved. For instance, we organized an I.L.D. branch in our shop. We were unable to get these members into the Party. They were not even sympathetic to us. We organized a shop I.L.D. branch with 75 members. I think it was the first I.L.D. branch on a shop basis in New York. We recruited three members into the Party during the time the branch has existed.

During the Election Campaign we organized a Vote-for-Foster Club. After the Election we called the members of the club together and asked them what they intended to do next. We proposed that the club as a body enter the I.L.D. This was taken up in the Executive of the Club and they called a meeting and decided to enter the I.L.D.

Trade Union Opposition Grows

Our main work is in the opposition. During the last year and a half we had two strikes. Our boss has two shops, and there are two separate shop nuclei, one in our shop of nine, and the other six members, and through the shop units working as a fraction we carried on the work in the trade union. We have a trade union opposition group of about 35 members of which our comrades are in the forefront.

We had two stoppages, one against the check-off system. After the strike the A. F. of L. bureaucrats decided to have the check-off system, whereby we come and renew our books, or take out working cards. The idea was to check up on the militant workers and any time one of these workers are a week or so behind in their payments, they can kick them out. We pointed this out at the shop meeting, and decided that I should not collect the working cards. I will not go into detail, but I did not collect the cards. I was expelled from the union and taken off the job. We had a stoppage and I was reinstated on the job and into the union. And the stoppage on working cards resulted in the entire card system being taken up, and there is no such question any more.

We succeeded in stopping the reorganization schemes of our local. I was on the negotiations committee and the boss was ready to admit the question of reorganization—a 40 per cent reorganization. Our efforts stopped this.

More Attention to Building Party

We have many weaknesses in our work in the nucleus. The fact that we did not recruit any new members, except three, for the last three years, is nothing to brag about. I think that the question of personal contact, that the comrades brought out here is very important. When we sit in the shop we talk to the workers as much as possible, but our comrades have the tendency when we go to lunch, to gang up and separate from the workers. This has to be overcome; we should mingle with the workers, instead of remaining by ourselves.

We also have now and then an open unit meeting, where we invite the workers of the shop that are close to us, we discuss various problems, ask them to criticize the comrades and sometimes they have quite a bit of criticism. We discuss the problems with them and then take them up with the Buro and try to solve them.

We took up the question of the Hunger March at a meeting, where there were 75 to 80 girls present. We explained what the Hunger March was and asked them to elect a committee to the conference. The committee was elected and we succeeded in electing a right winger who never went to such conferences. At the discussion, there were a few Musteites who said, "Don't give any money to those bums." We had a long discussion on this and the committee was sent and we collected \$5.00 to donate to the Hunger Marchers.

The important thing is to show the face of the Party, to become a shop nucleus. We took this question up and considered it carefully and from this conference and from the experiences of the other comrades, I am sure we will learn something and will be able to conduct the work more constructively than now.

Building Opposition Movement Thru Struggle in A. F. of L. Printers' Local

I WISH to deal with the attack of the Printers League, a bosses' organization, demanding a drastic reduction in wages and abolition of certain shop conditions, and the function of the opposition group, organizing groups of members of the A. F. of L. within the shop in order to prepare them for the struggle against the impending wage cut. Before the wage-cut was announced, we had a situation in two shops, one newspaper shop and one smaller job shop, where we actually carried on struggle on minor demands.

In the newspaper plant, we carried on a struggle for chairs and lockers. It seems very minor, but these workers realized that only through organization in the newspaper plant will they be able to get something and naturally they followed the

leadership of the opposition group. In the other printing shop, the working conditions were very bad, union rules were violated, the union officials refused to comply with the demands of the workers to remedy these conditions. The workers came to the opposition group, and as a result they had a strike and won their demands. These workers joined the opposition group, 18 out of the 19 that work in the shop.

Opposition Rallies Workers to Defeat Vote on Wage Cut

When the wage cut was brought before the membership of the union, the opposition group could stand up and say that, "Here, we have an organized group, here we have workers who have followed us and by putting forward a concrete policy, how the workers can succeed, we can fight the wage cut. The workers rallied to the opposition group. In the first vote that was taken, for instance, the officials and the bosses who joined together in proposing a certain agreement were defeated by over 1,500 votes. In the second trick ballot, which the officials tried to put over on the members, again the opposition group succeeded in defeating.

But particularly important is the fight that was carried on in the newspaper shops. I want to impress upon you that the newspaper workers are still getting a comparatively high wage, that this union is a union of highly skilled workers and well organized. You may think that the workers are perhaps not ready for struggle. When the wage reduction was proposed by the employers, the workers answered practically unanimously that they would not accept it. The officials were defeated twice in their attempt to put over the wage cut and certain other proposals of the Publishers Association. Only through a maneuver were the officials able to put through an arbitration decision. The arbitration award was for a wage cut and the stagger system. The workers accepted the cut without much protest. Well, they didn't care so much—they still made a high wage. But the stagger system has hit them so hard that the most backward workers in the most important newspaper plants some of those workers who never opposed their officials, have put up a splendid front against the stagger system that was brought through the arbitration. The result was that, after various meetings, shop action committees were formed and, in spite of the officials, certain shop struggles were conducted.

Workers Refuse to Submit to Stagger Plan

I cannot go into detail, but let me say that although there is no agreement between the bosses and the union that the stagger plan is abolished, in most newspaper shops the stagger plan is not in force. There is no such agreement that the plan is abolished, but the workers refuse to submit to this stagger plan. This is the result of the concentrated activity carried on by the Party members, carried on by the opposition groups, and particularly through broadening out the united front, joining

hands with militants that are even opposed to the Party, or to revolutionary ideas, but that are willing to fight the attacks of the employers. It is significant that the workers of a most reactionary newspaper were the first ones to rally against the stagger plan. It is natural that they were affected first, because it is a reactionary newspaper, and there you could see on the floor of the shop, workers getting together. It was a thrill to see these workers get up and say that they would not carry out the decision of the arbitrator, that they would declare this decision "null and void."

This lesson is of importance, not only to printers, not only to a certain section of the workers, but it points out that within the A. F. of L. union we can carry on work, but we must carry it on correctly. We must remember particularly that we must go to the shops and our Party members working with the A. F. of L. members in the shops must carry on the struggle down there.

How We Organize the Youth

We have also the problem of the youth. There are young workers employed in our industry. For a number of months the young workers complained that we don't pay attention to them. We have some Y. C. L.'ers in the union. They organized a youth club because, according to the union laws, they are "not entitled to the same rights as the journeymen are." Through this club they carried on activity, and they participated splendidly in fighting the wage cut. They were attacked from two sides. They got a double wage cut, and when this question came up they invited one of the speakers of the opposition group to their club meeting. And there you had the apprentices of the union accepting our program, working out resolutions on the plans of our program, presenting it to the meeting. Naturally, the officials were against them. The apprentices, 500 of them, lined up almost entirely for the opposition movement. Nobody had any interest in them except the opposition movement. At the last meeting of the union a fight was on between the opposition movement and the apprentices on one side, and the union officials and the bosses on the other side. It is important to point out in this respect that while the apprentices may say that we didn't pay attention to them before, as the young workers generally say that the Party does not pay attention to them, but when they presented their grievances and joined in this struggle with the adult workers, and when the adult workers adopted a proper approach, there you could see a splendid united struggle on the part of the adult and the young workers.

Deal with Needs of Unemployed

It is significant that although this is a highly skilled industry, we suffer from unemployment in the same proportion as any other industry. A third of the membership is working part time.

A third of the membership is not working at all. Unemployment has become a burning problem. We had to devise a policy in regard to the unemployed, and our policy was at first, naturally, to take money from the treasury. At one meeting, we demanded that \$30,000 be taken for the unemployed, who faced a blank week, without benefits. We received over 1,200 votes, the officials 700, but the officials declared the motion lost. We had there a definite movement of the majority of the workers in support of our policy. It was necessary to bring forward other points, such as city relief. The printers who get benefit from our union are not entitled to city relief. On the basis of city relief, on the basis of more relief from the union, and on the basis of unemployment insurance, we put forward a program for an unemployed organization. This organization was only just organized, yet it has had meetings where over 200 were present. Relief from the union, relief from the city, unemployment insurance—a three-front fight that must be carried on at the same time.

I do not want to give the impression that we have not made any mistakes, that we have succeeded in all fields, but I am bringing these points out—the fight on the scales, the fight for the apprentices, the fight on the unemployed—to show that within the A. F. of L. we can do work if we direct it against the bosses, at the same time exposing the bureaucrats—and through formation of a united front with the workers in the shops.

Building United Front in Strike Struggle

I WILL deal with a number of strikes in dye shops. Recently there was a strike in the ———— shop, in which we applied the united front tactic. Here we found the Unittd Textile Workers Union, one member of the National Textile Workers Union and a few sympathizers. When we came into the strike the organizer of the U. T. W. immediately whispered to some of his sympathizers that the organizers of the N. T. W. are in, and they should be gotten out of the meeting. When it came time for the shop meeting, the organizer of the U. T. W. tried to kick us out. He brought out the fact that the important thing to be decide is which union shall lead. We, however, emphasized that the important thing is to unite the workers to defeat the wage cut. We also pointed out to the workers that we didn't come there to break up the strike but to help them to establish the unity of all the workers in the shop against the boss. The workers listened and decided that the question of the union will be decided later.

The need of getting together all the workers in the shop, both the night and day shift, was taken up. This immediately put the U. T. W. organizer in the background. The conditions of the workers, the demands for which they were fighting, were

discussed. The workers also combatted the organizer of the U. T. W. when he proposed that instead of mass picketing the shop should be picketed two by two. These workers resented this and told him that this was wrong. They decided on mass picketing from 7 o'clock until 9, and after that two or three pickets to see that no warps came out of the shop. This shows clearly that these workers were following our policy of holding the shop together. As a result of this, when they got together to decide whether or not to continue the strike, the members of the U. T. W. sided with us. They decided to continue the strike on the grounds that the members of the N. T. W. who are working in the building had issued a leaflet calling on all the workers to go on strike, and the other workers had agreed to strike after learning that the boss was contemplating a wage cut during January.

After the meeting we spoke to many members of the U. T. W., pointing out to them the role of the N. T. W. They wanted to know why we have two unions in the city. We explained the difference, also why the U. T. W. organizer would not accept a debate on the question of the role of the U. T. W. or the N. T. W., although we had challenged him twice.

Now as to the other dye strike. We received a report from two unemployed workers, formerly dye workers themselves, of a strike in the ——— shop. Immediately we got in touch with some comrades from the Unemployed Council who were formerly dye workers, asking them to mobilize as many workers as possible. We went down there and mingled with the workers. The N. T. W. was the only organization down there. We told these workers that the first thing they should begin to do is to organize mass picketing in front of the shop, at the same time arranging for a mass meeting right near the place, to discuss the demands and elect a strike committee. *It is important to note that here the unemployed rallied solidly behind the employed workers. When they learned of the wage cut and that the workers were battling against the 14 hour shift and for an 8-hour shift, they told the workers to follow the leadership of the N. T. W.*

In the morning, out of 150 workers only 12 appeared on the picket line; the rest of them stood on the sidewalk. The Party members appeared on the picket line. The workers were afraid to picket because of the police, and it was necessary to break the terror. The police knew one of the Party members, who had sold *Daily Workers*, and wanted to know whether he worked in the shop. I told the policeman he had no business to ask this, because he doesn't work in the shop either and neither do I. Immediately all the workers, seeing the disturbance, began to gather around and a heated discussion on the conditions, the wage cuts, etc., took place. *The boss saw the demonstration and came out. He heard the discussion, and the result was that the wage cut was immediately withdrawn.*

Establishing Department Organization Thru Winning Partial Demands

I WISH to speak about the experiences in a packinghouse center. It is a city which has about 5,000 population, mostly packinghouse workers. We have there two larger corporations, and some small independent plants.

In one of the small plants a wage cut of 15 to 20 per cent was announced. These workers were members of the A. F. of L. They expressed their willingness, however, to talk over matters. We issued a leaflet on the facts we obtained, and we visited the workers again. They agreed to come together in a house. We discussed the problems and found that they want a real union. *The main question raised is that our organization is against religion and that they don't think they can belong to an organization which is fighting religion. They also raised the question of Communism.*

During the discussion, which lasted about three hours, we explained to them that one can be a member of the union without being a Communist or giving up his religious beliefs, as long as he is willing to organize to fight for his immediate demands. After this meeting they raised certain questions as to wage cuts and other grievances. They pointed out that they are no longer getting paid time and a half for overtime. They felt that they could not get the previous wages, but that they could get the overtime back to time and a half.

We decided to call another meeting and at this meeting we had seven workers, and they decided to organize the workers in their department mainly on the issue of overtime. In the next meeting we had already 20 workers.

Successful Partial Struggles

The question raised by them was that the day before they worked fifteen minutes overtime without getting paid for it. We decided to demand the overtime back. We had a strong group organized in the department, and they felt that this department could win the overtime back. The next day they were told by the manager to work overtime and the committee which they elected at the meeting told him that they would work only if they got their overtime pay. *They started talking to the workers and after about five or ten minutes they got their overtime pay.*

Then the question of the community chest came up. The workers were told they had to pay 30 cents a week for something like six months—this would have amounted to seven or eight dollars—which they were to give to the chest. All the workers were against it. This issue was discussed and we decided to refuse to contribute to the Community Chest. The department group decided to mobilize other departments to stop payment to the Community Chest. The result was that during two weeks time they prepared this work. When the manager,

the representative from the Community Chest, came to ask for donations, every worker told him that they were not going to pay. The result was that, with the exception of a few, all the workers refused to pay.

Build Department Groups

Through these partial struggles, we were able to establish organization in three departments. Now they have three department committees, and representatives from all the others.

Only a few days ago, when one worker was fired, they were able to stop the firing. Sixty workers walked out. They said: "If you fire this worker, we refuse to work. This struggle was won.

But we have a few weaknesses. While we have fifty workers in these plants, we haven't one Party member in the plants. We are taking steps to get members—a few of the best in the group—into the Party.

These partial victories have helped, and there is talk going on among the workers for our movement. The A. F. of L. has members in only one department in one of the big plants. In other departments there are quite a large number of Negro workers who are all for our organization. Through concentrating on one specific shop, it will give us the possibility of establishing organizations in the other plants.

Our Work Among the Longshoremen

THE Marine Workers Industrial Union picked out this city as a concentration point. At one time we had 900 members in our union. However, from that time, there has been a period of a year and a half where no work was carried on. The problem was to make contact with the longshoremen.

We went down to the waterfront and began mingling with the longshoremen, not telling them what to do but primarily listening to what they were talking about. After a few days we could pick up a conversation—we could hear the longshoremen talking about a certain thing and starting a conversation with another group. In this way we became known and they began to trust us. We got names and addresses and started visiting them.

Along about the middle of the summer there was a rumor of a wage-cut. We followed this up with leaflets and an open air meeting and came out openly as a union and agitated against this wage-cut. The response was very good. They turned out to the meetings, drew up resolutions against their union officials to be sent into the I. L. A. office and began to show signs of struggle. At this time there were no meetings of the I. L. A. and we raised the issue that they should hold meetings and discuss the wage-cut. On this basis they forced the local leaders to hold meetings.

In the *New York Times* there was an article where the leaders of the I. L. A. had openly proposed to the ship-owners that they would investigate and if conditions were found necessary they would allow a 10% wage-cut to take place. We immediately found out that the leaders of the I. L. A. had left for New York. We issued a leaflet asking where he was. When he came back he was met by a group of 35, demanding to know where he had been.

About four days later a meeting was called by a group of the A. F. of L. and they started to discuss the wage-cut. The longshoremen got wind of this meeting and they packed the hall. And when the I. L. A. leader got up and told hard luck stories about the poor shipowners, they raised hell and closed the meeting.

From this period of the first attempt to cut the wages, there was a lull in which our work was just general agitation. When the October wage-cut discussion began to take place in New York, we again began to get more and more response from the longshoremen. We developed some struggle among the crews and got such a response that we anticipated a struggle.

However, it must be said that we failed to develop any strike on October 1 due to a number of reasons. We failed to get organization or consolidate the groups. The main reason is that we were an outside force.

I can only point out the importance of working on the inside. The union itself is primarily of seamen. Regardless of what we say that people can go from one industry to another, this does not mean that we are going to be accepted by the longshoremen. Because of this the longshoremen call us outsiders, therefore they were not so willing to form an organization under our leadership. However, we issued leaflets on the waterfront and these longshoremen themselves had drawn them up, and these longshoremen went into the membership meetings and made proposals and motions along the line of the leaflets.

The very fact that we were isolated from the workers there before and due to the fact that we were outsiders, we failed to get any organization. Once or twice we organized a group of 35 or 40 workers, where we sat and discussed with them one night and the next meeting there were only five or six showed up and so we failed to organize any groups down there. I don't make this as an excuse but one of the reasons why we failed to organize any groups. Another thing, we failed to organize these groups and any organized opposition in the I. L. A. was due to the failure of understanding the importance of visiting them at their homes. We were too well known and they refused to talk to us on the waterfront. And through our activities and agitation and the influence that we had among the longshoremen, they kicked out certain of the fakers in the Union and elected rank and file members in their places. We gained prestige and sentiment on the waterfront. To give a picture of how much influence we have among the longshoremen—a fight took place

there about the issuance of a leaflet. The I. L. A. leader attempted to stick one of our members in the back with a knife. The ones who took part in the fight were those who took sides with us.

The new agreement was signed and the entire struggle took place, that is, a crystallization of the inner fight against the bureaucrats of the I. L. A. This culminated in the longshoremen demanding the opening of the books and checking up of the finances. And in this check up they found out that the leader had spent almost the entire income of the union. They demanded that the bonding company come down and give their statements. The I. L. A. leaders manouvered through gangster methods to prevent this expose being brought before the longshoremen. In order to cover up his misuse of funds and keep him from being kicked out he separated the local and one bright morning the longshoremen found that they had a new union on the waterfront they didn't know anything about. He got a charter from the national office. Now the fight is around this. Here we find ourselves in a position to form a united front. A united front that we were never able to have before. Here there are thousands of longshoremen that belong to no union. At the same time that they are carrying on this fight, the longshoremen are completely unorganized and there is no union which leaves an opening for a wage cut and unless this looseness is slacked up they are going to cut wages. Already they are talking of a wage cut taking place. These coastwise longshoremen are being brought into the union and used as a backbone of the I. L. A. organization. This gives us a backbone for our united front. The new local is taking the initiative through the rank and file members and in the next few days are going to put a call for a united front.

There is one word on the question of Party relations. Comrades I want to say that while it is true that the Party relations are improved, I can say it is not anywhere near to what it should be. Out of all the struggles there has been practically no longshoremen in the Party. The reason is obvious. The Party carried on no independent activities of its own on the water front, except during the election campaign. During this period of time the Party came down on the waterfront and even today any time a worker says anything about getting a wage cut or anything he is immediately branded as a Communist. Every rank and file member of the I. L. A. is considered a Communist and referred to as such, yet the Party carries on no independent activities there at all.

Auto

Proper Method of Concentration Leads to Struggle

IT IS not always easy to organize groups of factory workers. It is necessary to be persistent. From one auto plant two workers promised to have six fellows to a meeting. I came to the fellow's house and he had the other fellow present. He called me aside and said we have to go away from here. Later he told me that his wife is against him belonging to any union, or any organization and that she threatened to call the police. We went to another place and had a meeting with these two fellows. At the next meeting a few more came. At this meeting we took up the proposition as to what we can do in the plant. The discussion brought out that some of the men had been told to work on two machines. Working on two, three or even five machines is not unusual in auto plants. But in this shop, which includes many die makers, skilled workers, this had not yet been introduced. They decided to paint a sign against working on these two machines, and signed it the Auto Workers' Union. There was quite a commotion in the plant. The superintendent asked each worker if he had put up the sign, if not, did he know who put it up, but he could not get any answer from them. After about two days, the practice of each man working on two machines was discontinued.

This was a little thing but there are many other grievances of this nature around which we can develop struggle. The next thing these three workers decided to do was to put out a leaflet, twice the size of a business card, to be distributed inside the mill, in tool boxes, etc. This was done, and again raised quite a lot of discussion. At the following meeting which was a little larger, the proposition was made to distribute a leaflet form the outside. In the meantime, we had another group of workers getting together from another plant of about 300 to 400 workers—a small shop. This group had somewhat the same experiences. Starting from one or two, at the last meeting we had 8 workers. This group is made up of tool and die workers.

Skilled Workers Ready for Organization

We have been in the habit of expecting action only from production workers and looking with contempt on skilled workers, but here were skilled workers wanting action. We got out a leaflet and called upon them to organize into the Auto Workers Union. They not only proposed this leaflet but three fellows who were there raised \$5.00 to help get it out.

The leaflets were signed by the tool and die makers group of the Auto Workers Union. What was the result of putting out this leaflet? The leaflet was distributed at two large plants

and a few smaller plants. It dealt with the grievances that the tool makers felt at the present time. They objected to the leader system—which is a system where one fellow takes the lead in the work and he drives the others on. It won't go into all their grievances here. After the distribution of the leaflet in the plants at the following meeting of the group, a discussion was held on the reaction of the workers to the leaflet. It was decided to get another leaflet to answer the questions of the workers on the first leaflet. Some of the questions they asked were what is the Auto Workers' Union, what is the difference between this union and the A. F. of L. union, what is the initiation and dues, etc. After the discussion such a leaflet was put out and is being distributed at the present time. One more thing about this meeting of this group which is made up of tool and die workers. At the last meeting a decision was made to get in contact with workers from the other departments, particularly the departments next to them, and the next leaflet to deal with the problems in the other departments. One of these tool makers said it is not enough that we are organizing in our own plant. We have to spread out.

I want to take up the question of one more group that we attempted to organize. This is a group in another auto plant. We have five comrades working in this plant. I happened to meet with this group. At the time of this meeting two of them were working and three expected to get back into the plant. Since then they did get back. Arrangements were made for another meeting the following week. That meeting was to take place on Saturday afternoon and all of these comrades were working overtime, so that the meeting did not materialize. Then, we had a comrade who had been active in organizing a group in this plant some months back. I went around with him to visit a couple of contacts, but found that some were working again and so didn't see them. The comrades in this particular section of the city had twelve contacts. They visited these twelve contacts and they all promised to come to the meeting. At the meeting four of them showed up, which is a good percentage.

Give Tasks to New Union Rerruits

As to whether or not the workers want to fight, the very reports we get after lay-offs and wage cuts of sabotaging proves that the workers want to fight, and it is up to us to give them the means. I believe that if we handled the very first meeting with these groups in the right way we would have results. One of the comrades came back from a group meeting and reported to me that he had had a meeting with five workers and he got all of them to join the Auto Workers Union. I asked him what he had said. He said that they decided to join the Union but it didn't occur to him that unless he gave these workers some concrete work—even writing up and distributing leaflets regarding conditions in that shop, that it would be pretty difficult to get these workers to come again even though they had signed an ap-

plication. At the first meeting a discussion should be conducted bringing out the conditions in the shop and the necessary action to take regarding these conditions. After these groups are organized and begin to function it is even more necessary that we follow up every little happening that takes place in the group, in the plant, etc. I have seen a group develop to pretty large proportions in one plant. We organized a group of 40 members. They carried on a certain amount of work but they were not precautions, and as a result of distributing certain leaflets, 36 out of the 40 were fired.

Leadership Should Give Attention to Every Problem

Our experience, not only in the automobile industry, but also in the steel industry, shows how necessary it is for the leading comrades to meet with these groups and take up the minute details for every little incident that happens in the plant. I had an experience in one plant with a comrade who was working there. He was formerly a member of the German Y.C.L. and I had a right to assume that he would know how to act in a shop. When a leaflet was being distributed, he received one while he was eating his lunch. He got all excited, jumped up and ran all over looking for the comrade who was distributing, found him and patted him on the back and shouted what good work he was doing. Of course, the comrade pretended he didn't know him and told him to go to hell. However, the damage was done and I think this shows how thoroughly we should discuss every bit of activity that we carry on.

Shop Work — Main Political Task of Party Leadership

WE are developing the conference of auto workers. We had conferences before and they failed. The question we faced was: should we call the usual conference—a conference of mass organizations under the name of the Auto Workers' Union, or should we try to get workers from the shops? We came to the conclusion that the only way to build up the Auto Workers' Union is to get meetings of workers from the shops and on this basis to create a basis among the workers for organized struggle in preparation for strike in the various auto plants, especially concentrating on Ford.

In two weeks time we had fourteen meetings of auto workers in one plant, not only through Party members but also various mass organizations. When we began to hold the meetings of these workers we did not know much of the problems of the workers. We knew things in general. We knew that they were kicking against their conditions, but we did not know in what form. It was necessary to become acquainted with the issues

and problems facing the workers. In this work we involved the whole district leadership—the district organizer, the org. secretary, etc.—everybody working among the auto workers to help organize these meetings.

It is important at this time especially for us to get contact with these workers. When we had the meeting we found out that some workers were working now, others have their badges and therefore are on the payroll, and still others had hopes of getting back into the shop. And so we began to find different problems presenting themselves in these meetings.

We combined the work among the unemployed with the work in the shops. Also, the question of relief from the companies. We had block meetings. The workers are grouped together in certain sections of the city. In these neighborhoods we called house meetings, raising the combined issues of the workers inside and outside the shop.

In one Party unit we took up the question of work in the shop. We stopped talking about what we were going to do and we went into the unit and asked how many worked in the shop—how long out of the shop—any contacts in the shop, etc. Somebody said he had some contacts. How long would it take you to call a meeting? He thought he would need about ten days so we gave him two weeks. They called a meeting and this created enthusiasm among the comrades.

We had a case where a comrade, and a good comrade, said he knew four workers in the shop. He told us he could not call them to a meeting because one was a Catholic, another was still making \$5 a day, and "of course, we could not get such people into the union." But what are the facts? It is true that some workers still get a comparatively big wage. For instance, we have one fellow working in the tool room of the Foundry Department still getting \$7 a day. He reports the discontent of the workers there who are getting a cut. In one department they were preparing to cut the wages of the workers from \$6 to \$4 a day. One comrade said: "Good for them."

We have to combat these conceptions. The discussion we had on this brought out some other problems and helped to clear up the questions, but also gave us an indication that this view is strong in our movement.

Now, the question of the shop paper. Technically it is a little better off. We feel, the slogans we have raised in the fight against the wage cut—"Strike Against the Wage Cut" will have a good effect. We raised the slogan of "\$5.00 minimum wage"; the workers responded very readily. In spite of the fact that we haven't thoroughly organized the editing of a paper, we have established a prestige among the workers.

The *Michigan Worker* plays an important role among our workers. I will give an example. One of our comrades, walked into a plant and had a *Michigan Worker* in his pocket. When he hung his coat up, he saw it and got scared. We decided the thing for him to do was to hide it some place because we had

heard the service man goes through the pockets. He stuck it in the tool box and forgot about it. He was putting up a new machine and sent his helper to get some tools. His helper saw the paper and started to read it. As a result, seven or eight gathered around and began to talk about it. The foreman walked in and took the paper and put it in his pocket. He said to the worker who had brought the paper in, "I know you brought this paper in here, but I am not going to say anything about it, but for Christ's sake, be more careful, because if you are not, the other foreman will hear about it and he will have to fire you." (The foremen also got cuts lowering their wages to very little above the workers. We have established three contacts with foremen; one foreman gets \$5.00 a day, that used to get \$9.00. We can utilize them in the building up of new connections and carrying on work.) This foreman walked away and then the young worker walked up and said, "Hey, let me see that paper"; he said, "I can't, the foreman took it." This young worker said he wanted one, and asked where he could get one. He was told that it would cost money. He pulled a dollar bill out of his pocket and said, "Will this cover the cost?"

There are excellent possibilities for work. The street cars, the busses are buzzing with discussion. The workers talk when going to work; they talk openly in front of the service men. This creates a condition for us of real struggle. *We have raised for the workers a perspective for organizing a real strike. As a result of our work, we can organize a real strike against the wage cut.*

Methods of Work in Organizing Youth in Auto Industry

I WANT to speak on some of the experiences we have had in winning young workers in a large auto plant. Since last May we tried to establish a group in this plant. Sometimes it met and sometimes it did not meet, but there was no activity. Only about three months ago we got on the job. One young fellow whom we came to speak to said he wanted to organize but he did not know how. We talked to him about two hours and he still did not want to come. We went back there the next week and spoke to him again. This time he gave us some other kind of argument—that is was too far to go and so on. Finally, we moved the meeting closed. The next week we went down and got him and he came with us. We found this young fellow had many contacts in the neighborhood. In the course of the next three or four weeks following we began to meet some of the young auto workers. We spoke to them but they as yet had no confidence in us.

Applying Youth Forms

We took up the question in the nucleus of how we could get more addresses of these young trade school boys. We decided to have a party under the name of a sports club. We put out a raffle ticket, raffling off a \$5.00 gold piece. We wanted the two trade school boys with whom we had contact to sell these tickets to the boys inside the plant. The first week the tickets were out they came back and reported they were afraid to sell them. We had quite a discussion and they agreed to sell them the next week. The next week they reported they approached one man in the plant and he said sure he would like to have one of them but that he only had two car tickets, would they take them, they said sure; but then a fellow came up and bought the car tickets for a dime and he wouldn't buy the raffle tickets.

We did succeed with the party. There were about 100 fellows present. This was a house party, just a regular party of young fellows, but there were many trade school boys and young auto workers drawn in from the neighborhood. These fellows we had talked to before that were afraid of us were also down there. We won their friendship and confidence and the result was the next time we approached them to come to a little meeting we were organizing the young Ford workers to elect a delegate to the National Hunger March, several came down. As a result of this party we got in touch with a group of young fellows from 20 to 24 who had a social club. Later on we went down to the social club and found there were all kinds of automobile workers there. There were a lot of young fellows and also some older workers. The district organizer joined the club and spoke about the Soviet Union to them. One fellow said he had seen her speak in the neighborhood and that she was a Communist; yet, they made her the organizer of the girls in the club. She is beginning to win their confidence now.

As a result of the Party, six young trade school boys and a few other connections we got in the neighborhood wanted to join a club. We are going to build this club into a plain athletic club so they can establish themselves on a friendly basis with these workers and learn their problems in the shop trade school and get some of them to elect a delegate to the Auto Workers Conference.

Leaflet on Hunger March Brings Results

This party was held just a few weeks before the National Hunger March and we took up how we could get this before the young trade school boys. We said we can put out a leaflet, but you can't distribute it because the boys go in all directions when they leave, some get on street cars, some walk, some ride buses and some have cars. We decided on distributing the leaflet inside the shop and some of the comrades gave us some good ideas. They said, where time cards are, there are no service men around this place all night and you can go in there

at night and put in leaflets and in the morning when the fellows go to work they will get them. We put out a half page leaflet on the hunger march, two of the comrades who worked there formerly, but were laid off got into the plant Monday night December 5 and put the leaflets in at about a quarter to twelve. The next day we tried to find out what happened to the leaflets. Our comrades said they never saw the leaflets when they came to work, so we supposed the service men must have gotten them.

Accidentally about a week later we ran into a young fellow that six weeks ago we had been working on to draw him into the nucleus. He was the sole support of his family and his father put pressure on him to keep him away from us. And this young fellow who was working on the afternoon shift had one of these leaflets. The afternoon shift got the leaflets instead of the fellows on the day shift. All the workers got them. They were talking about it. They thought it was a great thing. And this young fellow had lost his fear. Also, we heard about this same leaflet later on from a young fellow, who recently joined the League. As a result of all this work we now have a nucleus of 7 members. They have attended regularly for the last six weeks. We have a leadership there. We have comrades who have learned through this, to lead the work among the young trade school boys.

Getting Contacts

About three or four months ago we had a unit of girls that were quite young. Two of these couldn't leave the house unless they attended League meetings. We asked them if they have any friends. They said sure. Then they started to bring their friends. We had a class and they started to read *Toward Soviet America*. As a result we got more members.

Well, we took up the question last time of getting some young trade school boys for the conference. And what did we find? We came down to the old members. They said it wasn't any use. But the new members were willing to try. We took one of the oldest comrades, a girl. We asked her don't you know any workers? She said yes in my neighborhood there is one who worked there, but it wouldn't be any use. And she found out after talking to him that he wasn't as tough as she thought he was. He spoke to us about the conditions. And he belongs to a church organization. And there are many more trade school boys there. He made contacts for the purpose of getting a group together. And these comrades said before it can't be done. It is a struggle to get these old sectarian ideas out of the comrades' heads.

I want to draw just a few conclusions from this work. And this is the first conclusion. As long as the comrades were in the office we didn't get anything done. It was necessary for us to get out among the workers. And now we have some leadership. Second thing, this is just a beginning of breaking our isolation. We begin now to see the many possibilities of developing strug-

gle. Before we only knew general things. The trade school boys were afraid to say anything; now they introduce us to their friends. This is one of the reasons we have made headway in this work.

Role of Language Press in Concentration

PROBABLY in most of the basic industries foreign-born workers are found. In such a situation the role of the language press is very important. There are many sections where the English language is absolutely unknown. There are hundreds of thousands of workers here who are 15 to 20 years in the United States and can't speak an English sentence. They read the language press. Because they are employed in the basic industries, and because they read all language papers, therefore, the role of the language papers is clearly apparent.

What is the relation between the language press and the Party organization? It is a very bad one. Usually the comrades only send in reports when they have some affairs or when there is some meeting. From the shops there is absolutely nothing. In the many years of my work in the *Rovnost Ludu*, it has always been the same. When there is a strike there is established a Press Committee and dispatches are sent to the language press. Sometimes, like during the Hunger March, in one day at least 20 to 30 letters were sent in usually three or four pages long. *Not only when we have a hunger march should it be written up, but we need the news from this particular neighborhood, from this particular shop, from this particular city every day and as often as possible.*

Pittsburgh is a big Slovak city, more than in any other city in the United States. At least 30 per cent of the population.

Promises that material will be sent and that comrades will help the language press seriously. These promises have not been fulfilled. In this we may say the situation is the same as in all our other work. We have a press conference and the press conference decides we will concentrate on this particular shop. From the shop, or organization, or unit we will send news releases and so forth every week. We will go and write up two or three articles on the situation, and we will distribute the paper to the workers. But nothing comes out of these conferences. Our time is very costly, and it is taken up by these conferences, but nothing happens. The decisions remain on paper.

In this respect, the continuation in the press of press releases is most important. If there is not a continuity in the stories which we write about, then it is simply like a shooting star—for a second light and then everything is dead again.

To make the people interested, you don't need only the story, or one leaflet. If you want to write only one thing about a

particular shop and stop for a year, don't write. Don't write once, but write regularly. I have a proposal which I believe would orientate labor press to our shops. *I believe that every Party bulletin published should be sent to every Party paper in the United States.* If we would get such things as the shop bulletins into our hands we could have two or three columns every day on the conditions on the jobs in the shops. This is what it would mean, the orientation of the paper toward the shop. It would get many splendid stories, splendid points, what is happening in this job, and in this shop. We would orientate on nearly every industry; what is going on in plants, in the mines, in the steel mills, the packing houses, etc.

On the other hand, we would get the whole Party organization orientated towards the language press. The language press is neglected. No one takes it seriously; the comrades seem to have a superiority complex and think the language press doesn't amount to anything. I hope, comrades, this will improve. I believe, comrades, that this idea should be accepted, and I believe it would be of tremendous help. When something exceptional happens, write it and send it in to the press, and it will be published. If these workers don't read English, don't read the *Daily Worker*, they can read the stories in the language press. If we give our language press to these workers, it doesn't mean solely we will get some ideas into their heads on the question of this particular shop or on the question of this particular movement, but it will be connected with other issues in the paper in which they are interested. They will discuss these papers and in this way we can go not only to the workers, but into their organizations where there are hundreds and thousands of workers, and in this way we will become a force in these organizations.

Special Attention to Problems of Women Workers

THE Twelfth E. C. C. I. Plenum resolution calls upon our Party to turn our faces to the factories. How is this decision being carried out in the work among women masses? We must study the shop conferences of December 30th-January 1st held in New York and Chicago for an answer.

In many of the factories represented women are employed. In these factories the women have special grievances in addition to the main grievances of lower wages than the men.

However, with very few exceptions, the reporters brought out the neglect of special work among women in the shops of concentration even at a time of preparation of the strike where the majority of workers were women. The comrade from the Trenton doll factory says, for example:

"The Regal Doll employs 850 workers, 85% of which are

young workers and half of these young workers are girls. The wages were as low as \$3, \$4, and \$5, a week and the hours ranged from 50 to 70 and even 90 a week. One woman worked 85 hours for \$6.00 and \$7.00 a week."

Further he states:

"Monday morning, mass picketing began in driving rain. Half the shop struck. The girls (with whom we had practically no contact during the strike preparations) showed the greatest militancy on the picket line."

The workers won 15% to 30% increases. Some of the workers in the shop received as high as 200% increases. Girls, who previously received two and three dollars are now getting a seven to eight dollar minimum.

The reason that the women went out on strike was due to the putting forward of correct demands as exemplified by results of victorious strike.

A comrade from New York further brought out the neglect of work among women in the knitting factories prior to strike preparations.

"Last week a group of workers from one of the largest knitting mills in Brooklyn came up to the office and said that a new system has been introduced in the shop, the 'check-up' which will mean discharges or a wage cut. There are about 200 workers, about 60 workers are men and the rest—140 women, and they are neglected whereas the men are mechanics and better off. One group of ten brought up 19 to the union and they all were ready to call a strike and were sure of all the men, but admitted that they had no contacts with the other workers. Still the group was ready to strike without mobilizing the women. We corrected it in time, mobilized all the women workers for the strike which resulted in a splendid victory."

A third comrade speaking at the Chicago Conference gave some good examples of partial struggles conducted by girls in a metal shop without our leadership.

"I went to the house of these girls and found they were working in a large metal shop (1,100 employed now). It turned out that these girls have been trying to agitate the rest of the girls to walk out. It is pretty nice to bring out their methods of organization in this shop without us. In one department where they had 70 girls, 18 worked with this girl and they had six they were going to go through with it. Several walked out. One of the girls grabbed a pole and wouldn't go. Some drifted back. All 16 are going to go through with it. They sent delegates to the other girls. They are going to start a fight against the last wage cut. They have spontaneously put up a struggle against the lay offs. They are going to raise hell and they were able to keep one of the girls who was laid off twice, able to keep this girl's job."

At the New York Conference a comrade pointed out the following:

"We in Lawrence also realize that it is absolutely necessary to work out special ways and means of approaching the women. We not only have the difficulty in general to organize the women because they work during the day and have to be home at night, but because these are Italian women and have very large families. We remember the experience that we had at the first indoor meeting. We had arranged a party for the children the day before. There were about 150 children and these children brought some of their mothers to the meeting next day. And what do we find? At nine o'clock they had to go home to put the children to bed. We must work out ways and means for them to come to meetings where they can learn how to organize."

From the above we must draw the following conclusions:

1) That our work among women in the factories chosen for concentration in the basic industries by the center and the tracts have so far remained on paper, (Western Electric and the Stockyards in Chicago, Wood Mill, Lawrence, Mass., textile mill in Passaic, N. J.) limiting our activities only to needle and miscellaneous light industries.

The present Detroit strike in Briggs, Hudson, Murray Body plants is no accident. It is a direct result of daily activities and preparations of factory groups. While insufficient attention was paid to work among women, the problems of getting the women into factory groups and into struggles were not entirely neglected insofar as agitation and propaganda is concerned. For over two years the comrades of the T. U. U. L. and the Party met with futile efforts in getting the women to join the Auto Workers' Union. However, in the present strikes the women workers who make up a large number saw a possibility of improving their conditions. When the strike was called and the demands drawn up which included substantial pay increases for women workers, they whole heartedly came out in support of the strike and led the militant picket lines twenty-four hours at a stretch. The number of women who joined the Union were far above expectations. The Detroit District and the Union must consciously follow up the activities among women and overcome the tremendous handicap of forces for work among women.

2) That neither the Party, the Y. C. L., nor T. U. U. L. sufficiently recognize the need of special forms and methods of work among women and girls as part of the general work of the shop nucleus and shop groups, in preparation for united front struggles in the factories. This neglect greatly weakened our work since we were isolated from this particular category of workers in the factories, thus endangering the successful mobilization for struggles and strikes.

3) That now more than ever will the Party nucleus and

sections have to develop special forms of work among women along the lines laid down by the E. C. C. I., namely developing women's delegate meetings. This will have to become the responsibility of the shop nucleus and not to be left to the Women's Departments. That the present work among women carried on around the factories such as distribution of women's leaflets, occasional bulletins, sale of the *Working Woman*, will have to be increased ten-fold. The women recruited into the unions as a result of strikes and struggles will have to be given special attention by the unions both regarding political education and social activities, which will have to be worked out concretely in given localities, in conformity with activities of the Party for work among women.

Let International Women's Day campaign mark the beginnings of carrying through the C. I. line for work among women in the factories. "Once and for all an end must be put to the underestimation of work among the proletarian women, which is specially important at the present time. Working women must be mobilized on the basis of delegate meetings, this work to be regarded as general Party work." (Resolution Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

A. D.

Needle

Special Approach to Women Results in Victorious Strike

LAST week a group of workers from one of the largest knitting mills in Brooklyn came up to the office. A new system has been introduced there—a check up. They mark down every garment that is produced by every worker separately and they know what they are paying to the worker and after the worker is through with his day of work, they tell him—your garment cost him fifty-four cents to produce, the next man to you made the same garment for thirty-five cents. I am losing money on you. That system has been introduced only about three or four days ago. These workers feel that this system will mean discharge or a wage-cut, and they are right. We made arrangements with this group and a group of 19 came up on the next day.

About sixty workers are men and the rest of them are women. There are about 200 in the shop. The men are mechanics and get higher wages. Those who came to the meeting said that they have no contacts with the other workers, the only contacts that they have are the mechanics or better paid workers. They also stated that in case of a fight on dis-

charges they are sure that all the men, about 60, will be ready to strike. The proposition was made by one of the workers that we immediately elect a committee out of the 19, that this committee should consider itself as the shop committee in case of any discharges on the coming Tuesday, that this committee declares the shop on strike. Another worker said that this committee is not a workable committee, we should wait with the election of a committee, let us wait for two or three weeks later when we will come nearer to the season when the shop will be filled up then we should speak about strike and organization.

What stand could we take on such a question? Our recommendation was that a committee should be elected. In case of discharges, that this committee be one that will know where to go and where to complain but before that committee considers itself a committee of the shop they should Tuesday morning before they go into work, popularize amongst the other workers that such a committee is in existence. The advice was that this committee is not an open shop committee but it is a committee that will have to work secretly but the workers should know about it. If it doesn't come to one of these three points, a wage-cut that will affect all the workers, discharges, or something similar, that this committee should work underground. Only then when it will come to a sharp conflict then the committee should act openly.

The Committee should not declare the shop strike. The Committee is to popularize amongst the other workers, the women as well as the men, that the workers were discharged and that they are going to speak to the boss to reinstate these workers. Before they go they should get the support of the other workers. If they will act by themselves, they will be isolated and even though they may declare the shop on strike, the shop strike will be very ineffective because the workers will not know of it.

The workers felt we were against the strike. They said, what is the use, we come here and say we want to strike the shop and you tell us not. And it took us much time to convince the workers they are wrong. They are right in one sense, they should strike against bad conditions. But how? And they accepted our proposal. That was Wednesday. On Friday evening we called the workers from the other departments to a meeting. When we took up with the workers who they knew, they said you call this and that one and they spoke of 30 workers. And at Friday's meeting we had 30 to 35 workers from the other groups. They were mobilized for Saturday to popularize the strike for better conditions. On Monday the strike was declared with the result that after one week of strike, we had a splendid victory. The workers knew of the strike. *On Monday, after one week of strike, we had cut the hours from 50 to 40, recognition of the shop committee, a 10 per cent wage increase and other*

improvements in the shop, and an agreement with the Union. Due to our own negligence, we did not get the agreement signed on time. But we finally corrected this and the agreement was signed.

Bolshevik Seriousness of Nucleus Wins Confidence

I COME from a shop of 200 dressmakers, most of them young Italian-American girls. The problem of organizing that shop is of course a very important one, and a very difficult one, because, in working among these young workers, the fear of not being able to come to our meetings because their mothers do not allow them makes it very hard for us to approach them, and take up their problems.

How the Nucleus Organizes Its Work

We have in the shop several Party members and several Y. C. L. members. They are distributed in every department. Our work and methods of work that we carry on there is as follows: Each individual Party or League member has around him a few connections, and they see each other practically every minute of the day. They discuss not only the problems of work, the question of the garment itself, but also the question of organization. The constant agitation against the hard styles, low pay, tremendously long hours, such as 70 to 80 hours a week and at times having to come in on Sundays, cause the workers at the present time to consider the question of organization.

The nucleus discusses the work of each individual member. "To whom did you speak this week?" "What have you found out about this worker?" "How is this worker lined up towards us?" From this we can gather just how our influence is being spread in the shop and how far we have succeeded in reaching the larger number of workers on the question of organization.

Many Partial Struggles

We carried through three small partial struggles. One was the character of the work the young workers have to do. Young girls have to do a certain stamping with a certain chemical powder. This chemical powder goes under the skin of the hand and causes blisters. The girls complained to the bosses. The bosses didn't pay any attention at first. One of our Y. C. L. members who works among these young girls spoke to them and said, "We must stick together. We have to go together." These young kids were very much afraid, because they could not imagine going over to the big boss and demanding gloves. This Y. C. L'er said, "I will go over and talk to him, but you

go with me to stand around while I talk." By showing the young workers that the Y. C. L. comrade was aggressive, they felt better and had more confidence about getting gloves. *They got the gloves.*

The rest of the workers said, "Look at those kids, they got what they wanted." Some of them said, "Why can't we get what we want." Thus this struggle of getting the gloves was a very successful one, and these young workers, numbering about six or eight, are under our influence.

Another struggle we had in the shop, in one plant the operators were situated in a room and a row of machines was considered a plant. In one of these plants a worker, an Italian woman, was fired, and the workers in this plant resented it. One of the workers stopped the power and said, "This worker will not be fired." The forelady could give no reason for firing her. The power was stopped and the workers didn't work, and it was a question of a walk-out. The forelady thought this might spread to other departments, so the worker remained in the shop.

Another thing happened in a different plant, where workers were standing around for work the whole afternoon until 5:30, when the boss came over with the bundles and told them to sit down and work. The workers said, "It is now time to go home." So the workers began to walk out, and about 15 to 18 actually walked out from the place. The boss threatened them that if they came back in the morning they wouldn't get any bundles. But they made up that if they didn't get bundles they would get the other workers to walk out with them. When they came in the morning, they had the sympathy of the rest of the workers and the boss gave them work.

This showed the workers that through struggle they can get something. We now have groups in the shop. We called them to a meeting. We took up the question of the wage cut that is looming. In this connection I wish to point out a very serious mistake that is being committed by the union itself. I had it officially from the union, because the representative to our nucleus had this idea. His opinion is that we don't have to have a union group in the shop because the nucleus is sufficient.

The Party and League members understand and carry out the line of the Party, which is to organize the shop around immediate issues that arise every day. His opinion is that we should not have any union in the shop; the union can only be built when the shop is organized. The opinion of the nucleus is to the contrary, that while we must have union members in there, we must definitely build up a union group that is responsible to the union for its activities as well as carrying out the policy of the union in that shop and that the nucleus works through that group, guides the policy and carries out the work.

Shoe

A Shop Nucleus in a Shop Controlled by the Revolutionary Union

I AM going to discuss the functioning of the shop nucleus in a union shop. We carry on open activity. Even the boss knows that there are a number of Communists in the shop, but he doesn't know we are organized into a nucleus. We sell the *Daily Worker* and all kinds of literature quite openly. We have all kinds of collections for the Party, the press, and the union, and all campaigns of the Party are brought into the shop.

Sell *Daily Worker* Inside Shop

Our shop has about 135 workers. Our unit has about 11 members, and about 3 or 4 old Party members, comrades who were always active in the Party or trade unions. Before we formed this unit, a street unit concentrated on our shop and was selling between nine and twelve copies of the *Daily Worker* near the factory every day. When our unit was organized, we took over the sale of the *Daily Worker*. We succeeded in raising the sale to 23 or 25. The majority of the *Daily Worker* readers are of course, very close sympathizers, including the Party members.

However, we got a couple of readers of the *Daily Worker* by our activities and one especially, a young American comrade, who is reading the *Daily Worker* very eagerly and when he fails to buy a copy, he really misses it. We are also selling all kinds of pamphlets and literature.

We were trying to spread the Party in the shop. Of course, we are in a very favorable position, where we can speak to the workers very openly about every campaign the Party is carrying on, about the Communist Party itself.

Unit Holds Open Meetings

In order to get the most militant workers closer to the Party in an organized form, we decided to have open unit meetings.

Between the militant workers and the leadership of the shop we had a very successful meeting in the sense that all grievances were settled and the workers came out in a better mood and with a healthy mind toward the organization and the leadership in the shop.

Then we had another open unit meeting where we utilized that meeting for pure political purposes, that is, we had a discussion in that meeting on the role of the Party in the shop. The meeting was a success, but we were not satisfied very much with it, because the section organizer who led the discussion made a poor job of it and it was not what we expected from him. We had about 15-19 Non-Party members from the shop. The majority were Italians because the majority in the shop are

Italians and we got them closer to the Party, especially one. The workers who did not know about the Party now speak about the Party differently than they did before.

Insufficient Leadership by Section Committee

Our unit is bringing the Party forward to the workers but we could do much more provided we *would have better guidance from the top leadership*. I must say that in activity that the unit is carrying on, it is on our own own initiative. The section until now has failed to give us real guidance and leadership. We do not have section representatives to our meetings and when we do have one he sits a minute and runs out for ten and never stays from the beginning to the end of the meeting and does not know what we take up at the meeting.

I think this section is a very disorganized section where the section leadership and the entire section apparatus does not function the way it should. I will give a concrete example. The agit-prop director of the section never bothered to know whether we have discussions in the unit. We did not have but one, and that was about two weeks ago. We are already organized about five months as a nucleus. The org. secretary of my unit did not give a copy of the minutes to the section for quite a long time and the org. secretary does not bother to find out why this is not being done. I think that the section does not know and cannot know what our unit is doing. However, we are told, that we are one of the best units in the section. I do not know whether this is so or not, but how can they know about it.

I must say comrades that the District also did not bother to call us to a meeting and find out how we are functioning. Why do I say this? The *Party Organizer* and the rest of the literature stresses the importance of the shop nucleus. But yet the leadership never bothers to find out how the nucleus functions. If the top leadership will not pay any attention to the unit we will not be able to make the necessary advances. We took in three new Party members during a very short time. One was an ex-Party member, one was a very close sympathizer. I say if we should go on with more proper leadership we can draw in more workers and develop our unit to about 20 workers. I wish to say that until now the Party did not show a concrete line how a unit should function in a shop especially in a union shop, where we are in a much more favorable position than in a non-union shop.

The question of a shop paper, our union decided to take up with the leading comrades in the union and the leading fraction. Their opinion was that we should not issue a shop paper because it is a union shop and we gave up the idea. We are not convinced whether this is correct or not. I for one am not convinced whether this is correct.

Comrades, I must say that our unit is becoming a factor in the shop to the extent that the workers look up to it. Now for

instance, there was a certain grievance between a Y.C.L. member and a non-Party member. Those workers know that I am the unit organizer. They know the unit meets on Wednesday. They came to me and asked me to take up the grievance. This in itself shows that we are gaining the confidence of the workers.

Careless Methods of Work Harmful to Organization

I WORK in a shoe shop. We organized a nucleus there last February. When I came in the shop there were only a few Party members, and during the week we recruited several and formed the nucleus. We had a group of union members, about 35 to 40 members. During this period we issued the shop paper in the name of the Communist Party. We saw that the union members of the shop were in sympathy with this paper.

In this time the union developed many struggles in the shops of the shoe industry. We recruited three more Party members, and we had a nucleus of eleven members. We had three Party members that had been members for a year and about ten months, and the rest were all new Party members. These Party members were all in one department except myself, so our meetings were conducted only on the questions of the one department. Usually we had a long meeting on the questions of this one department, and so we neglected to discuss about reaching the other departments. We mentioned how to reach the rest of the workers in the shop, but every question that was taken up was about that particular department where we had the strong union group.

Shop Paper Liked by Workers

We issued the first bulletin on May 1st, and the workers were glad to see the bulletin. But this shop paper got into the hands of the bosses. They tried to prejudice the minds of the workers. We discussed this paper and we decided with the consent of the workers to issue another paper in the name of the nucleus. The question came up as to whether to issue the paper in the name of the nucleus or not. In the nucleus there were many discussions in opposition to this shop paper because the Party comrades in the nucleus were afraid of being exposed in the shop and lose their jobs. We discussed this for three weeks, and the majority of the vote was for issuing the shop paper. So in June we issued this paper, and at the same time there was a big strike in another shop, so it made it easier to organize the workers in our factory.

Workers in Shop Support Shoe Strike

In this period we tried very hard to mobilize the workers in the shop to support the struggle of the striking workers, on the picket line as well as financially. During this period we collected \$600 in the shop for the union. We announced this contribution to the strikers and to the whole membership of the union. The membership was given the impression that our shop was completely organized into shop groups. This was not so, because this organization and the collection of money was only in one department. There were collections in the other departments for the strike, but we had no organization whatsoever of the union or the nucleus.

So what happened? It happened that when the strike was defeated, the result was that the union contacts which we had in our shop were demoralized. There were many discussions about our failing to go on strike at that particular time when the other shop was on strike. After the strike we discussed in the nucleus how to develop struggles in our shop.

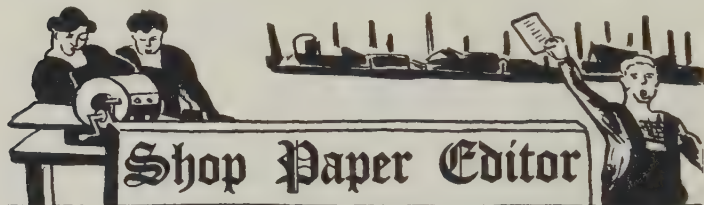
The comrades of the nucleus and the union had the impression that our weakness was that we exposed ourselves by issuing this shop bulletin, so the union proposition was that we must issue a union bulletin, not in the name of the nucleus but in the name of the union. The comrades of the nucleus had the opinion that it was foolish to issue a union bulletin because in the union we have much literature that mobilizes the workers, but if we have a shop paper we must have it in the name of the nucleus as we had before.

Wrong Methods of Work

I want to explain why we failed and why the nucleus was defeated in the shop. The bosses gave us a free hand for the distribution of literature, to collect money for the *Daily Worker*, all kinds of collections in the shop. The bosses gave us an opportunity to be organized. But this was a maneuver of the bosses in order to wreck us. It so happened that the boss, after the strike in the other factory, prepared himself to defeat us. How? He started with the lay-off. He claimed that there was not much work in the shop. So he laid off two men, one a Party member and one a union member. It so happened that the opinion of Party members was that every year he lays off because there is no business but he reinstates them again when the shop becomes busy. What happened? We did not study enough what the boss was doing in order to defeat us. In the union we tried to elect a committee to go down to the boss and demand reinstatement of the fired member. The Party members insisted he does not intend to fire men. He does not mean to defeat the organization in the shop, but it was merely a case of no work. I want to say this: The boss had the chance to lay off 15 members of the organization, including five Party members, and they were not laid off but fired, and this openly

showed that this was in order to defeat us. After that we were in a bad position. What was decided? The union elected a committee mechanically to go down and get the boss to reinstate the men. But when the particular department raised the question of reinstatement, every member of the shop refused to go down to the boss. There was a fight between the members in the same shop. We found out also that in our nucleus we had a stool pigeon. He was also a member of the union. We exposed this stool pigeon right in the open union meeting.

In conclusion, I saw that our failure in the _____ shop is that we realized very little that the "liberalism" of the boss wrecked us, and we recognize this mistake. We see that our future task now is—we remain five Party members in the shop, in three departments. Our task now is to reorganize again the few contacts which we have, together with the union.



The Shop Paper—An Organ of Struggle

AT THE recent shop conferences held in New York and Chicago, numerous reports pointed out how our shop papers, even where there was none or little organization, succeeded in winning certain demands for the workers—safety, shoes, sanitary conditions, water fountains, and often forcing the withdrawal of wage cuts. This, in itself, proves the powerful influence that can be exerted by our shop papers.

How We Raise Immediate Issues and Partial Demands

The dozens of shop papers reviewed in the center show that these papers have learned how to expose the wage cuts, speed up, the questions of individual foremen, the spy system, individual stool pigeons by name, unsanitary conditions, welfare schemes, part time work, and unemployment. Each shop paper contains letters from workers on conditions in specific departments. Today we cannot say, therefore, that our papers are abstract. They are beginning to learn how to raise small issues that trouble the workers.

But our shop papers should not merely be a form for voicing these grievances. They should show to the workers how, in what manner, they can defeat these attacks. The shop papers should discuss and consult the workers in the formulation of demands around their grievances.

It is here that our shop papers show serious weaknesses. In many cases the articles on grievances, letters from workers, are printed without any comment, without suggesting and showing to the workers how to combat these various grievances that are raised by us. *We solve all the manifold problems in the shop with one general formula—organize into department committees or shop committees or grievances committees.*

True, in some of the shop papers we have already learned how to raise concrete partial demands. For instance, the *Illinois Steel Worker* in its October issue deals with the grievances and raises demands: "Pay for working after working hours"; "Drinking fountains in 52 Beam Mill Motor Room"; "The reopening of the large toilets", etc. These are good, but how shall the workers present these demands, how shall they organize to win these demands. This the paper does not tell them.

But while this is one of the best examples in raising of the partial demands, in many papers, we do not show to the workers that we have a practical solution for their day to day problems. For instance, the *Head-Light*, a railroad paper in California, exposes the action of a foreman in firing a worker who has been on the job for twenty years. It says: "The only way to deal with this gorilla is to organize and meet him like the Russian people met their blood-suckers." Surely, such an answer only isolates us further from the workers.

The November issue of the *Illinois Steel Worker* deals with the conditions of the part time workers in one department and concludes: "Organize! Only when organized will we be able to force the bosses and government to give us unemployment insurance." But what about conducting today the struggle for more days work, a minimum wage, immediate cash relief, in addition to uniting in the struggle with the unemployed workers for unemployment insurance? This the paper forgets.

Or take the *Chevrolet Worker*. There are many articles on immediate issues: 10 per cent wage-cut, the question of individual foremen, the welfare scheme to which the workers are forced to donate twenty cents a month. But even in the last instance, where already we have succeeded in many plants in defeating schemes of this character, these experiences are not utilized by the paper to develop a struggle in the shop.

But the outstanding shortcoming is that we place in the background the agitation for struggles around general wage cuts. In steel, for instance, there is a contemplated ten per cent cut. In Chicago a united front conference was held recently where tasks and demands were formulated. But the shop papers relegated this issue to the last page. It does not become the issue which permeates the whole paper, agitating the workers, arousing them to the need of organization and struggle if they are to defeat the cut. The workers have not sufficient confidence that they can defeat major cuts. It is therefore the task of the shop papers to be more convincing, to establish and restore

confidence in the fighting ability of the workers. It is precisely this that should be the major perspective of the shop papers, utilizing the victorious struggles and experiences in other plants to arouse the workers to action.

The Shop Paper as an Organizer

In many instances the shop papers stimulated organization. In some plants we have examples where workers on their own accord, without our leadership, after reading the shop papers, organized into committees. Our shop papers have not yet learned how to crystallize the earnest desire of the workers to unite into organized action. The shop papers have not utilized the past traditions of struggles of these workers for organization today.

The *Waterfront Worker* in San Francisco has in its first two issues carried articles on the 1919 Longshoremen's strike, drawing lessons from this strike, etc. How is this utilized for the building of organization today? On the San Francisco waterfront there is the company union (The Blue Book) and the I. L. A. The task here is to work inside of these organizations, build up the opposition movement, and at the same time unite all longshoremen, organized and unorganized, in a common struggle on the waterfront despite the resistance of the leadership of these unions. The *Waterfront Worker* in the first issue states: "*What is to prevent us from organizing small undercover groups of those whom we know on each dock? This is the only way we can lay the basis for a real union.*"

It is correct that the first steps in building dock committees is to get a few longshoremen together but the need for unity of all longshoremen, organized and unorganized, regardless of political or religious beliefs, on the basis of concrete grievances, this plays no factor in the shop paper.

The only means of making inroads among these workers and building a real union of the workers will be the development of this organization precisely on the basis of organizing partial struggles on the waterfront. But this is not the perspective of the *Waterfront Worker*. For instance, in the second issue on the question of speed-up, it states: "*But what can be done about it (the speed-up)? Some suggest that we slow down. That is O.K. but that requires a high degree of organization.*" Thus to our San Francisco comrades it is necessary to have a high degree of organization before we can develop such form of struggle as slowing down on the job. Already in some railroad shops, metal shops, this practice has been carried through successfully with very little organization.

Generally, there is serious confusion in telling the workers how to organize. For instance, the *Chevrolet Worker* of December in its leading article on the wage cut gives in three consecutive sentences three different forms of organization. The paper does not agitate around one unified form. There is no differentiation between the united front movement and the exist-

ing union. The key to winning the workers for united action in any shop depends upon our ability to organize even the most backward workers around specific grievances in the shop. The shop papers, while constantly bringing forward the revolutionary unions, should simultaneously emphasize the need for unity and be the initiator in crystallizing this unity in the shop. By doing this the shop papers will help to convince the workers that our unions and the Party have the only correct policy for the workers.

The Struggle Against A. F. of L. Bureaucrats and the Socialist Party

If we are to set the workers in motion, the shop paper should be an important means to expose the A. F. of L. leadership and the leadership of the Socialist Party. In our papers we assume already that the workers are convinced that the A. F. of L. is no good. We freely use name-calling—fakers, betrayers, etc. We lump the workers together with the officials into one reactionary mass without explaining and constantly differentiating between the workers and the leadership. The *C. & S. Worker* in Colorado calls the Brotherhood “a company union,” the *Packinhouse Worker* in Kansas says: “The A. F. of L. is no good and we need a real union.” The *Stockyard Worker* of June states: “. . . but the A. F. of L. does not care for the hard working men, women and youth because the A. F. of L. is a company (bosses) union and not a union of the workers.” In addition to that, the article causes a rift between the unskilled and the skilled workers and places the red union, as the champion only of the unskilled worker, and not all the workers.

In all our shop papers we have not taken each action of the reformist leaders, each statement, and showed to the workers what these mean, how these leaders betray the workers. Assertions and accusations are made without explanation. This does not create confidence in the Party, in the red unions. It does not steel the determination of the workers to struggle.

The papers do not show how to carry through a struggle for demands in the locals of the union, for exemption dues for unemployed workers, the election of rank and file officers in the locals, etc. These are still in the main absent from our shop papers.

In our struggle against the Socialist Party, the Negro reformists, and “left” reformists, our papers commit the greatest mistake of all—the mistake of complete omission. During the election campaign we spoke about the Socialist Party in our papers. In most cases we assumed that the workers already understood that the Socialist Party is the third party of capitalism. We spoke of the Republican, Democratic and Socialist Party in the same tone. We did not show the special role of the Socialist Party as the main support of capitalist reaction in the ranks of the workers.

During the past few months not a single shop paper has carried an article on the Socialist Party. The shop papers should expose the position of the Socialist Party on wage cuts, unemployment, its support of various schemes of the government to make the workers pay for the present crisis, bring these into the shop and carry on a constant exposure of the Socialist betrayals. Unless this is done our shop papers will not be a factor in undermining the influence of the Socialist Party.

It is through this method that our agitation will be broadened, its scope widened. Our shop papers as instruments of the Party, must consciously and persistently help to educate the masses of workers whom we reach. This requires the utilization of the concrete issues, the drawing of lessons from concrete struggles for general political conclusions, and to link this up with the position of the Communist Party. The bringing in of the Party into the shop does not therefore mean mechanically repeating, "Join the Communist Party." We must take each concrete issue and show the position of the Party, why and how the Party fights for these demands.

It is necessary to begin today a careful consistent propaganda in our shop papers to enlighten the masses on the basis of their own experiences that the Party has a correct policy and program for the workers and fights daily in the interests of the workers. We should show the connection between the preparations for war and the concrete conditions in the shop. We should answer the question as to whether war will bring back prosperity. We should compare the life of the workers in the Soviet Union and the U. S. A. We should take local community issues, rents and local politics, etc., and show their relation to the conditions of the workers in the shops. Particularly in one industry towns or in territories where the workers live around the factory, we should take the issues of the neighborhood and bring them into our shop papers. Every promise of a local politician or reformist politician should be exposed. Every act of discrimination against the Negro workers should be a means of wider education to undermine chauvinist influences in the ranks of the workers.

Our shop papers offer us an important means to reach thousands of workers that we do not reach with our *Daily Worker* or language papers. *The shop papers must become the Communist newspapers in the shops.*

B. G.

What the Shop Papers Should Emphasize in the Next Issue

THE issues which should be raised in all coming numbers of our shop papers and closely connected with the problems and grievances in the shop are:

The Detroit strikes—the wave of strikes that are taking place in Detroit at the present time are of particular importance for the workers throughout the country. The fact that in highly concentrated industry—the auto industry—the effects of the crisis and our leadership has succeeded in organizing a series of strikes, should be utilized to show to the workers in other plants the possibilities of strike struggles today and the winning of the demands. These strike struggles can be utilized for stimulating actions against wage cuts in the steel and other industries. The lessons from these strikes, the fact that in a series of other plants where no strikes took place, wage cuts were withdrawn or wage increases given, shows the powerful effect of these strikes. This should be pointed out to the workers and intimately connected with their specific grievances in the plants.

March 4—The political importance of the March 4 demonstrations throughout the country cannot be stressed in this item sufficiently. It is important that our shop papers shall bring out very clearly the need for unemployment insurance concretely linked up with the needs of the part time workers in the shop. The chief point to be stressed in our shop papers is to direct our main fire against Roosevelt who takes office on March 4 and bring back the promises that he made prior to the election for the “forgotten man”. It is around this, that we should weave our agitation in the shop.

Marx Anniversary—The Fiftieth Anniversary of Karl Marx' death takes place on March 14, 1933. It is necessary that we acquaint the workers in the shops through our shop papers who Marx is, and what he has done. In this connection we should deal with the effects of the crisis today, show the position of Marx on the theory of the crisis and in a popular manner deal in a programmatic manner with the Party as the only adherent of the revolutionary teachings of Karl Marx.

Smash Sectarianism—Penetrate the Factories

(Summary Speech of Earl Browder of the Chicago Shop Conference, January 1, 1933)

IT IS clear from the discussion of this conference and the contribution of the conference that we are not standing still. We are making certain small moves forward in shop work, or we are at least creating some of the pre-conditions for a move forward. You see I am not boasting very much about what we have accomplished. However, when we examine some of the composition of this conference, we can say that out of 75 or 80 registered for this conference, about two-thirds are directly connected with the work of some particular factory, and about one-third are working factories, or are only recently unemployed,

still are very close to the inside work of their particular factory. This already gave us the foundation which provided us with a better discussion of shop problems than I have heard before. When I say better, it has to be taken in relation with very bad discussions that we have always had on shop work.

Conditions Exist for Rapid Development of Mass Struggles in Shops

However, when we examine the improvement of the work in connection with the shop, one thing stands out clearly in almost every report, *that the increased activities of the workers in the shops is to a great extent spontaneous, not the result of our organized stimulation and leadership. That the up-swing of the activity of the workers in the shop is greater than the improvement of our work, and that really we are lagging behind in relation to the workers in the shop even more than before.* When we hear all of the reports that are made about the conditions of the part-time workers, the stagger system workers who constitute a very large proportion of the so-called employed working class, it becomes clear that in the shop there is rapidly developing a condition for a mass strike movement, mass struggles. We have been moving in that direction since the beginning of the crisis. We never fell under that right-wing Trotskyite theory that workers will not strike during times of crisis. We knew it was not so and we orientated ourselves to strikes, and the strike struggles have grown with the deepening of the crisis.

Today we must say the development of these conditions which drive workers into strike struggles are intensifying so rapidly that during the year 1933, we must expect to have great mass strike struggles far surpassing any that took place in 1932. There are thousands of issues of struggle accumulating in the shops, and the combination of all these causes for struggle together with that great outstanding cause, that the workers in the shops are actually facing conditions of eviction, the loss of all of the ordinary means of life, and starvation of themselves and their families, even while they are on the job.

Perspective for Developing Strike Movement for Unemployment Insurance

These conditions are not only preparing the masses for economic struggles in the usual sense and on a larger scale, they are giving a necessary political character to these mass strike struggles. *And it is no longer a fantastic utopian idea for us to begin to speak about the possibilities of the development of a strike movement of the workers in the bankrupt industry for the demand of unemployment insurance.* We are having now maturing the objective conditions for a real joint struggle of employed and unemployed, for unemployment insurance, in

which we will have not only the actions of the unemployed on the streets, but around that the strike action of the employed from the shops. In my opinion we should be thinking about this possible development and without any undue haste, we should be preparing in our minds, discussing among ourselves, in just what form we can hasten the maturing of such a movement and bring it to realization.

Certainly our work in the shops as yet is far too weak and too scattered and too fragmentary to give us any immediate basis for practical proposals for action of this sort. But given even a few months of energetic and correct work in the factories and the consolidation of our growing influence in organizational form, this may rapidly be changed.

Living Contact with the Workers

To the extent that our work is improving in the shops, it shows itself most clearly in our growing understanding of the methods and forms of workers' democracy, of a close consolidation between the Party and the non-Party workers, in the joint working out of demands and grievances. Growing from this is better connection between leadership and masses, a growing initiative from the lower organizations of the Party and trade unions and growing mass initiative, liquidation of the bureaucratic methods of leadership from above by decree and the development of organic leadership which has less of the artificial about it, a more living contact with the masses.

In this effort which we are making to get close and intimate contacts with the masses of the workers, to form the basis of their immediate needs, even the smallest of these needs, we can see that we also have to guard against certain distortions of this line. These distortions take the form of a certain narrow practicalism or a certain tendency to set up economic questions as against political questions, to exclude political questions, and to set the smallest economic demands not as the path to the larger and greater demands, but to the exclusion of the larger demands.

Connecting Up Immediate Needs with Broader Political Issues

We must guard against this narrowing-down tendency, which, if allowed to develop inevitably leads toward the grosser developments of opportunism. It already has been spoken in the discussion, how this tendency sees the raising of political questions in the shop work as an obstacle to the development of our influence and organization. This is not true. This is a completely wrong idea, that the raising of political questions, even of the highest grade of political questions, high politics, international politics, are obstacles to the penetration of the shops. On the contrary, I will say that it is impossible to thoroughly mobilize the workers in the shops if we ignore these high political questions. We must take up these political ques-

tions. We must bring the fight against the war danger in the shops. We must take up all of the questions of the international antagonisms. Especially we must bring out the role of the Soviet Union. We must raise the issue of China in our shop work. *The question is HOW we do it. Not whether we shall raise these questions or whether we shall not raise them. We must raise them. But the question is how.* It is quite true that the usual method of raising these questions does not help the work in the shops. But this is merely because we do not handle these questions in the correct manner. We bring them abstractly. We bring them forward as substitutes for the questions that are closer to the workers. We bring them forward in the wrong way.

It is the proper linking up of the shop questions with the larger questions that is the problem that we have to solve. And the solution of this question is not hastened by ruling the political questions out of consideration in the work of the shop unit. On the contrary.

Lack of Attention to Negro Workers

Another outstanding weakness of our shop work is the weakness of our Negro work in relation to the shops and trade unions. In the unemployed work, I think it is possible to say we have made some progress in winning the Negro masses to participation in the struggles and into our organizations and winning the white workers for the struggle for Negro rights. But this progress is not to be seen, to any similar extent, in winning Negroes into the trade unions, and in winning the Negroes in the shops. This is not because the Negro workers are entirely out of shops—it would be absolutely untrue to raise the question in this form. Although the percentage of unemployment among Negroes is much greater than among whites, this does not remove the problems of the Negro workers in the shops. This is a question which, for us, has a significance far beyond that of merely winning a certain number of workers. We attach far greater significance to even winning a small number of Negro workers for active participation in our trade unions, in our shop struggles, than to any similar number of other workers. Because the Negro question is today one of the key questions for the breaking of the imperialist ruling machine. In the Negro question we have one of the weak points in the armor of American imperialism, where the development of struggle registers with ten-fold effectiveness in creating difficulties for the capitalist class and improves our chance of advancement.

Our Struggle Against Social Fascism

Then, too, that aspect of politicalizing our shop work, which is represented by the struggle against social fascists, against the Socialist Party and the Musteites, the A. F. of L. leadership, renegades, etc. It is quite true, as some comrades said,

that this has been neglected in the discussion. *As work in the shops comes to a higher stage of struggle, we are inevitably faced with the problem of struggle against the social fascists, and that it can be so much neglected shows the low development of our shop work.* Surely, one cannot speak of winning the miners of Illinois without speaking of an intense struggle against social fascism every step of the way. Neither can one speak of progressing very far even in those industries which are entirely unorganized, except in terms of meeting and defeating the influence of the social fascists. There will never be a time when our work progresses to large mass activities in these industries that the social fascists will not appear. They will appear in a very strong position, because they come in not alone on the basis of getting among the workers themselves, but they come in with the cooperation and assistance of our class enemies, the bosses. The conquest of the shops by our forces can only be accomplished as a result of the defeat of the A. F. of L. and the S. P.

Each Shop Calls for Specific Methods of Work

It is correct, as one comrade remarked, that we have given insufficient attention to the different aspects of the problem of large shops and small shops. Perhaps it would be a little more correct to say between centralized, trustified industries, especially the industries of mass production, on the one hand, and the small competitive industry, on the other hand. The conditions of penetrating shops in these two main categories are quite different. The methods whereby we can organize struggles, win struggles, build organization in needle trades shops, gives us very little to go by in tackling the steel industry—very little. They give us very little guidance in the penetration of the automobile industry. The tactics and strategy of economic struggles in these small decentralized industries to a large degree cannot be followed in the development of the struggles in large trustified industries. *We must give more attention to examining the concrete problems that have to be solved in these different shops and industries and not try to answer questions with single broad generalizations.*

Some Wrong Tendencies in our Shop Work

I think it is necessary to point out two wrong ways to approach shop work which one meets everywhere. First, there is a tendency to explain all of our shortcomings in the shop work on the ground that our Party members are afraid to work in the shops, that they are cowardly, they are not sufficiently ready to sacrifice themselves. This tendency tries to find the answer to our weaknesses by methods of shaming our Party members and driving them into more intensive activities. That is the wrong approach. The other and opposite kind of wrong approach is the conception that one must not be active at all, one must conceal oneself so thoroughly as to remove all pos-

sibility of discharge and thereby remove all activity and possible influence in the shop. These two wrong approaches are opposites, but they both achieve the same result. In the last case it is clear nothing happens in the shop. We have had many shops where we had shop nuclei for the past six or seven years. Nothing ever happened there. The membership of the nuclei have never changed unless somebody died. No new members were recruited, no leaflets were issued, no shop papers, and if there were any, it was something written outside the shop and the workers did not respond. Such shop nuclei are worse than useless because if we did not have them we would recognize we would have to find some new workers there, and we would establish the new nucleus that would live and grow. But as long as we have this nucleus on the records we refer the shop questions to this nucleus.

Nor, is it any use to merely drive our comrades into action. In most cases we will find that the lack of activities can be overcome by showing the comrades how to become active and how to do the work. And also, to show the comrades that we do take seriously the question of maintaining our unit in the shop. When we do not take up seriously, with real Bolshevik seriousness the problem of safeguarding the unit in the shop, then we achieve the same end as in shop units which exist for years and do nothing, since in such cases, our unit is destroyed by ill-planned activity and lack of safeguard. One can therefore say that in most cases our best shop units are still those that live the shortest length of time, and those that live the longest are the most useless. We must solve this contradiction. We must find some way to give our good active units a longer life. It is intolerable where we have conditions that a shop unit has an active life of one or two months. As soon as it begins to work it is destroyed by the enemy.

Safeguarding our Members in the Shops

We must learn how to safeguard the existence of the shop nuclei, not by stopping them from working, but by giving them the correct forms of work and giving them safeguards. One of the worst crimes is a careless attitude toward the safeguarding of our work. We have to realize that we are illegal in the factories, even though we still maintain certain legalities in the streets and elections. In the factories we are absolutely illegal, and it is entirely necessary to get the same degree of attention to preserve our units from destruction by stool pigeons, shop spies, etc., as we give to the most important political questions of the Party. We have to take it with the same seriousness that we would take preparations for a strike or other major class battles. We must study and learn the methods of conspirative work in the shops. The safeguarding of membership rolls, the safeguarding of contacts and learning the technique of hiding our personnel from the boss without hiding the existence of our organization from the workers. The very worst thing is to

have a shop unit destroyed not through its shop activity but merely through exposures by stool pigeons.

It is quite true that the degree of spy systems in the factories is greatly exaggerated. The spy systems are much smaller than the general popular idea gives them credit for. And if we were correctly approaching the problem we could defeat most of the efforts of these spy agents. It is not impossible to meet them and defeat them, but as long as we neglect them, as we do now, they will continue to spread the impression that the spy system is a highly invincible, terroristic organization. We can only break this fear of the spies by really taking up the struggle against spies very, very seriously.

A Poisonous Conception for our Movement

Then, I would give special mention to the necessity of struggle against this idea that the workers in the shops have not starved enough yet, that after they have starved a little bit more maybe they will fight. This idea absolutely separates us from the workers. You can not organize workers when your reaction to wage cuts is "good for him." This is a very degenerate form of opportunistic leftism. It is just running away from the problems of the struggle of the working class. This idea is poison to our movement. Such ideas will destroy any organization of the workers unless they are immediately challenged and driven out. We have to declare an intolerant war against the attitude that we get satisfaction out of the misfortunes of the workers. Our attitude toward every reduction of relief, reduction of wages, worsening of conditions has got to be an attitude of anger, rage, hatred against the bosses and demand for immediate action of struggle against it.

How Initial Groups Can Continue to Live and Grow

The next problem. Several comrades have pointed out that we have to a certain degree learned how to make contacts in some factories and built up small groups that grew to a certain point. Then we were not able to pass that point and the groups stagnate, fall apart and disappear. What is this problem? This problem is essentially that of learning how to politicize our small beginnings of organization and make them the center of mass interest and real activity inside the shop. If in a shop of 1,000 workers you build up a group of 4, 10, 15, 18, 25, the moment you begin to get in those numbers you can no longer feed the members of that group merely with the mechanical task of increasing its size. The movement can grow beyond this first initial stage, the first small grouping, only if we immediately find the political activities for this group whereby they will feel they are affecting the masses of the entire factory. If we don't find that, then this group will stop growing and it will disappear or will stagnate and become inactive. *This means to find the issues of struggle in that factory and to raise these*

issues before the main body of workers in the factory. Every factory group that has learned how to do this has continued to live and grow. It is when a factory group does not learn how to do this that it stagnates and declines.

Shop Papers Help to Extend Influence in Factories

The lack of attention to this problem is shown in the lack of attention to the shop papers. What are the shop papers? They are the instruments for politicalizing the life of a shop group and extending its influence to a mass of workers. Our shop papers are too much looked upon in a routine and mechanical fashion; we draw an abstract table of contents that should be put into this paper as if we were producing a national news bulletin of some kind. But a shop paper is not worth anything at all if it is merely to carry general news of the movement, general agitation and propaganda of the movement in the shop; that can be done much better by our pamphlets and the *Daily Worker*—much better. The shop contributes in the specific raising of the issues of the shop, and the linking up of the shop life with the larger political situation.

Developing Workers Correspondence

After the shop paper, comes the use of the language press and especially the *Daily Worker* in connection with the shops. In this respect, the future development of our shop work depends upon a much more systematic and energetic development of workers' correspondence dealing with shop problems, shop conditions, shop struggles and their relation to the trade union life, and the unemployed councils. We hope that it will be possible in the next month or two to show a decisive change in respect to workers' correspondence in the *Daily Worker* and in the language press. If we can't do this, we can not make the turn towards shop work. Every comrade who wishes to be taken seriously as a shop worker, or as one who contributes in any serious way to our shop work, must set himself the task to be a worker-correspondent, that is, send in to one of our papers or many of our papers, periodically, a certain number of stories about shop events, shop struggles, shop conditions. A definite task should be undertaken in this respect. Each one should assume the responsibility of sending in once or twice a week, or if that is too much, once every two weeks, at least one small item, 100 to 300 words, a third to a full typewritten sheet of paper—that is all.

Building the *Daily Worker* in the Shops

Having improved the contents of the *Daily Worker*, we have to extend the circulation of it and of all of our language press. The problem of our press is also the problem of penetration of the shops and the dealing with shop problems in such a way as to transform these papers into necessary instruments for anyone who wants to do shop work. The coming campaign of

the *Daily Worker* for circulation and for sustaining funds, which is going to be one of the major tasks of the Party beginning in January, is a task which we must succeed in or we are not going to have a *Daily Worker*. This campaign must be carried through, not merely as a routine money-raising activity, but as a political activity in connection with unemployment and our shop and trade union work. One means of making the best possible use of these shop work conferences is to begin the transformation of our papers; in this way, that the best contributions to the discussion, of which we have a fairly satisfactory stenographic record, should in my opinion be published in the *Daily Worker* and as much of them as possible in the language press over a period of three or four weeks. I think this will probably be done, and I hope everybody will understand the great value of printing these records of our discussion and of continuing the discussion, making this conference the beginning of a broad discussion involving all members of the Party, red unions and all friendly workers organizations—a real mass discussion of problems of shop work.

The Significance of the Shop Conference

This conference and a similar conference being held in New York is an example of how the Party solves very difficult and complicated problems. We cannot solve these problems by decrees from above, by resolutions of the Central Committee of Polburo or Secretariat, by a series of instructions, through a circular letter. One of the weaknesses in the past has been our reliance on such bureaucratic methods of solving difficult problems like shop work. It is quite clear, in order to solve these problems, we have to create conditions for collective work of all the leading members of the Party and through them a large section of the workers—these conferences are examples of working out such most difficult problems. On this basis, we are going to make much more definite steps forward in our work; we are going to begin to find the solution of many problems that have hitherto baffled us, and in the process of learning how to work ourselves and how to ourselves solve these problems, we are also learning the proper method of guidance and leadership of the entire working class in the mass struggles that are developing.

International Experiences in Shop Work

Germany

A. E. G. Henningsdorf. There are about 1,500 workers there. The factory section of the red trade union of metal workers of Berlin reacted to the smallest requirements, and has grown, in a short space of time, from 250 to 315 members. In the preparation for the political twenty-four-hour protest strike, the section succeeded in getting all but 200 workers to join the strike.

A month later thirty-three workers of the welding machine factory, members of the reformist union of metal workers, carried out passive resistance to reduction of wages under the leadership of the section of the red union; the administration made concessions, agreeing to pay for the time spent by the workers awaiting issue of piece work also. The section of the red trade union then organized passive resistance in the tool department, against the 15 per cent wage-cut and was successful here also.

Once again the section of the red trade union successfully organized passive resistance in the press department (135 workers) when the company attempted to cut the piece rates in the production of radio cabinets, with the result that the old piece rate was retained. All this work caused a split among the reformist members of the factory committee (from the materials of the R. I. L. U. brigade, which investigated the A. E. G. Henningsdorf plant).

What does this prove? It proves that even during a crisis, in the presence of tremendous unemployment, if there is an initiative group, which sees to it that at least the collective agreement should be observed, the workers follow them, even the reformist workers. Whenever we do something in the factories and shops, we can defeat the reformists. It is certainly not a trifle when all the factories around do not strike; while our Party cell and revolutionary trade union opposition succeed in organizing a twenty-four-hours strike, during which only 200 out of 1,500 workers remain on the job. This was a tremendous success, and such successes could be achieved everywhere, if only we worked properly. This example shows us also the necessary method of work, the proper approach to the workers; not by shouting, not by general political slogans which do not explain anything, but by concrete work based upon the needs existing in the factories and mills. This is the way to mobilize the workers for political action.

Unless you do this you will not move a single step forward. (From the Report of Piatnitzky to the Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

Poland

A peculiar form of the strike movement is the *seizure of factories*. This is the second basic form of struggle against the capitalist offensive, especially against dismissals. The movement has assumed a mass character and is extending to a number of factories and tens of thousands of workers. Owing to our agitation and above all as a result of their own experience, the workers became convinced that it was not enough to remain passively in the factory, but that it was necessary to get into contact with the workers of other factories and the unemployed and to carry the struggle beyond the confines of the factory which had been seized.

An example of the seizure of a factory accompanied by the struggle in the streets and sympathy strikes, was given recently by the workers in Pabianitz. While 800 workers occupied the factory, a crowd of 300 workers demonstrated and fought stubbornly with the police at the factory gates, after which the struggle was shifted to the territory of the factory.

From this we see how acute was the character of the resistance of the workers, which, in a way, contained the *elements of civil war*. Similar elements were observed in other actions of the working class. The strike movement, bringing the working masses more and more sharply into conflict with the apparatus of fascist dictatorship, draws them into political life and sets before them the question of power, the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis. (From the Report of Comrade Lansky, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

Czechoslovakia

The fourth question is concerned with the revolutionizing of the economic struggle, or the uniting of the economic with the political struggle. In my speech I said that this problem cannot be solved, by mechanically attaching any political slogans to the economic demands. Was I right in this? I think I was. For the problem is a complicated one, and it consists, generally speaking, in this, that we, first of all, know how to put forward such political slogans during the economic struggles as have immediate connection with the conduct of the economic struggle; secondly that we employ such political slogans as are directly connected with the economic struggle. But the *most important thing* is the use of *revolutionary forms of struggle*. I once again base my remarks on our practice. *Take the case of Freiwaldau.* That was originally an economic struggle of the workers, both employed and unemployed. The state power opposed this struggle. It forbade strikes and demonstrations. The workers would not submit to this, they went on strike and demonstrated under our leadership, despite the prohibition. It came to shooting. Eight workers, men and women, were shot by the gendarmes. What was the answer? Political mass

strikes throughout the whole district, lasting for three days. The whole district stopped work, until the burial of the workers, who had been shot. Throughout the country, there was a wave of over 150 political protest strikes, hundreds of demonstrations, thousands of protests and proclamations from all sections of the working population. This happened under *our* leadership, in response to *our* appeal, under *our* slogans. And the result. A respite in the terrorism, throughout the whole country, for a certain period. Freiwaldau became an affair of high political importance. (From the Report of Comrade Gockvald, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

England

In the Cowlairs factory in Glasgow (2,500 workers, the cell has nine members), the cell put forward the demand that the basis of calculation of piece work should be explained to the workers, also that the workers should control the fixing of piece rates, and that wages should be paid according to collective agreement. After the rejection of these demands by the manager, the cell got several hundred workers to stop work, and attracted the other departments to the movement forcing the management to make concessions. As a result, the influence of the cell greatly increased, and the next issue of the factory newspaper had to be reprinted (from the report of the organizational instructor in England).

In the Troedyrhiw colliery (South Wales) immediate demands were put forward affecting wages, firewood and better ropes. One good letter from the pit, published in the *Daily Worker*, was sufficient to occasion a strike, which ended successfully. The cell then issued a leaflet with new demands (for firewood, for the blowing of the whistle at the end of the day, without delay) and the management immediately gave way. (From the Report of Comrade Piatnitsky to the Twelfth Plenum, E. C. C. I.)

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Take another strike—the London lightermen. We had not a single contact with these men when the strike began. The question was how to get this contact. Finally, comrades were selected to go down and try to get some idea of what the lightermen's conditions were, to get the story written up in the *Daily Worker*, and then try to get the *Daily Worker* among the strikers. This was done and the *Daily Worker* was sent to the chairman of one of the lightermen's locals and this man, who had never had any use for the paper before, took it to a meeting of 500 strikers, read the story to them and the strikers said: "That is the only paper which has told the truth about our fight." That gave us our first break. As a result of the interest aroused by the first story, we were then able to build up a big influence, and in two of the most important branches a special meeting was organized at which twenty lightermen joined our Party.

In one of those branches we still have a big influence. But the important thing was the role of that the *Daily Worker* began to play among a number of workers who had never heard of the paper before. (From the Report of Comrade Pollitt.)

* * *

The masses want to fight. They are seeking leadership, and, however weak the work of our sections may be, they come to us.

The course of the Lancashire strike may serve as a clear example of the strong tendency towards the Communist Party, of the masses entering the struggle. Take the beginning of this strike, the strike in Burnley. In this town there are 87 textile factories, and the number of workers reaches 25,000. In Burnley the Communist Party had 9 members and 9 non-Party members of the Minority Movement. In addition, our Party was not popular among the organized workers because it had obtained a firm reputation for being against the trade unions. On July 24th, owing to the growth of strike sentiment among the workers, our Party held a meeting in Burnley. Unexpectedly, 5,000 workers came to the meeting, which was an unprecedented event in Burnley. This meeting was decisive. On the next day, July 25th, the strike commenced, and the leadership was practically in the hands of the Party, although the Party had not prepared for this. The workers demanded that the members of the Party should give them instructions about the further extension of the strike. In two days the strike pickets under Party leadership closed all the 87 factories. In the night of July 27-28 the Party organized a march to the neighboring textile centre of Nelson, with the aim of extending the strike. 15,000 workers took part in the march.

Does not this example of the Lancashire strike and the example of the American Communist Party, which last year, led the big miners' strikes in Illinois and Ohio, show that the masses are ready for the fight, and are seeking the leadership of the Communist Parties and the Red Trade Unions; that Communists need only to exert even slight efforts and the leadership will fall into their hands? (From the Report of Comrade Gusev, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

On the Leading Role of the Party

Comrade Stalin has rightly said: "The masses must convince themselves, on the basis of their own experience, of the correctness of the Party's policy." Thus, we must do all we can, by our slogans, and our policy, to convince the masses, on the basis of their own experience, that there is only *one* workers' Party, only *one* revolutionary Party which demands and upholds the class interests of the proletariat and all toilers—the Communist Party! Precisely for this reason, we must bring the leading role of our Party to the political and revolutionary con-

sciousness of the proletarian masses, because we must raise them, and educate them in struggles for the great aims that are ahead of us—for the victory of Socialism. We must not allow any false ideas about unity, or drivel about “unity at any price” to make headway among the masses, just as we must fight most sharply against all syndicalist conceptions, as, for example, the idea that it is possible to achieve the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, without a revolutionary Party. International examples have shown that the working class is tremendously sensitive, when the principle of a revolutionary Party and of its leading role is in any way obscured, neglected or set aside. We have seen, for example, in France how the C. G. T. performed manouvers in the question of the policy of a united front, and how, for a long time, hundreds of thousands of workers were thus led into confusion, so that our Party and the C. G. T. U. sustained a certain loss of tempo through the skilful tactics of the reformists. Let us recall what has already been said at the Second World Congress. There, in the theses and statutes it is said:

“Under certain historical conditions it is quite possible that the working class may be permeated by numerous reactionary strata. The task of Communism does not consist in adapting itself to these backward elements of the working class, but in raising the entire working class up to the level of the Communist vanguard. The confusion of these two conceptions—Party and class—can lead the the greatest mistakes and to chaos.”

What real, proletarian leadership means has been shown by the victory of the October Revolution in 1917. Without a firm, implacable, vanguard, always connected with the masses without the Party of the Bolsheviks in the foreground, the masses would not have been convinced of the correctness of the Bolshevik policy, in the then situation. Any weakening, even the smallest weakening, of the leading role of our Parties among the masses may lead to the most fatal results in the present tense situation. (From report of Comrade Thalmann to Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

The Positive and Negative Experience of the United Front

We must ourselves know with whom we are organizing the united front, on *what basis* and for *what purpose* we are organizing it. This must be explained to the workers in popular and simple language. Frequently the united front is established by us in this way: representatives of the Party, the I.L.D., the W.I.R., the R.T.U.O., the Y.C.L. and the Communists of all these organizations form a united front. This, comrades is a *united*

front with ourselves! The united front in a Bolshevik sense signifies *joint action against capital of the Communists and the members of the revolutionary Trade Union with the workers belonging to the Social-Democratic Party, the members of the reformist unions and the unorganized workers.* Such is the real united front. We could quote a mass of such examples from the factories in Germany, from the times of economic and political strikes in Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, France and a whole number of other countries. We have already splendid models of the united front (Brux, Vienna, the tramway workers' strikes in Poland, anti-fascist action in Germany, the strike in Belgium, etc.) But these are only models and not general phenomena. And yet, the task is to convert such models into every-day phenomena, into the every-day method of struggle. An all-embracing instruction cannot be invented for the correct organization of the united front. Bolshevik sensing of the position is what is necessary here. A different specific approach is necessary in each factory, in each industry, in each country. What is important is to have a definite line of policy. This was formulated at the VIII Session of the R.I.L.U. Central Council as follows:

"The forms of united front which existed up to the present are not enough because there is too much sameness about them, and because they are too much of one type; the forms of organization and the names may and should change. The thing does not lie in the form and name. What is important is that the organs of the united front should be:

- 1) Formed for struggle against the employers.
- 2) Elected by the workers in the factories.
- 3) Consist of workers of various tendencies, and
- 4) Not replace revolutionary trade unions.

The maximum organizational flexibility must therefore be displayed in the form of organization and names of the organs of the united front."

* * *

The task of the Communist Party is to raise the backward workers to a higher stage, but not to echo their backward views. To take up a comradely attitude to the rank-and-file worker, the social-democrat, the syndicalist and the non-Party worker, but not to give up our positions. *Bolshevism has nothing in common with the worship before spontaneity.*

This is why such a united front will be a Bolshevik one, in which we march together with the workers, fight for the same demands, but do not forget for a single moment that we are Communists, that we have *further* aims and tasks than the backward social-democratic and non-Party workers, who in this particular action are going hand in hand with us. The task is

to lead them further on the basis of their own experience. This is why we must again and again emphasize that the tempos of winning a majority of the working class depend upon the correct methods of our work in the masses. How to win a majority of the working class? In which way, by which methods and by what means? Our reply to this must be by the Bolshevik application of the tactics of the united front from below; international Bolshevism knows of no other ways and methods.

The most careful control on the part of the Party organizations is necessary in the application of the united front, how they are to conduct themselves, and in which way they should take advantage of this united front for the consolidation of the revolutionary position of the proletariat. But if we will leave our members of the Party, our lower functionaries to their own resources, they might commit many errors. Is it the case that the considerable number of errors which we register are due to bad intentions? No, they are not due to bad intentions. And this is why the Bolshevik training of our members and lower cadres, particularly at the time of the application of the tactics of the united front with social-democratic workers, is highly necessary and is a condition requisite for the correct application of the united front. (From the report of Losovsky at the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. published in the *R.I.L.U. Magazine* Vol. 2, No. 21-22.)